

November 17, 2016

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen and I begin with thank you to everyone who has made this hearing possible. My grandmother said, "you listen with your ears but you hear with your heart for what comes from the heart goes to the heart and since you are calling this a hearing you must agree with my grandmother. I want to reintroduce a methodology for public school funding, "Justice Funding," that Southern Echo put forward with the Mississippi education working group, parents, students, community organization, and various other stakeholders organized across and around the state during and after the development and the legislative<sup>we</sup> passing the MAEP Funding Formula. "Justice Funding" would require the state to fund public education each year at an amount that would remedy past discrimination and wrongs and put every child in the public school system on equitable and equal footing with one another. It would simply mean putting forward the resources necessary to catch every child up and keep them up. Over the years, we have worked with various stakeholders and experts on costing out the "Justice Funding" formula and believe at this time that the base student cost should be \$10,000 dollars per student per school year cost<sup>with a</sup> catch up factor of 1 to 1 determined by how far each student is behind normed against national standards. So, if a child is 1 year behind you add \$10,000 additional dollars, 2 years \$20,000, 3 years \$30,000, and so on. These additional dollars would go directly to classroom resources and teachers that are necessary to catch every student up and keep them up. The \$10,000 dollars base student cost includes a fully funded kindergarten and pre-k programs.\* The incentive is to catch up early so you don't pay multiples to catch up later. These resources would pay our teachers at a rate that exceeds the regional average and put our best teacher with the students most in need. "Justice Funding" would also include a factor for our gifted students who have also been discriminated against.

Our children deserve nothing less than our best and what I'm saying to EdBuild is that you can cost out a formula that is for more dollars<sup>than \$10,000</sup> but anything less is morally indefensible and political demagoguery.

Leroy Johnson

Parent, Grandparent and Senior Policy Analyst, Southern Echo

## **Public Comments to EdBuild and Legislators Regarding Possible Changes to School Funding**

November 17, 2016

As a mother of a public school student and a staff member of The Parents' Campaign, I am following this process very closely. I have three points to share today:

First, equity among school districts is key to the current MAEP formula, but the Legislature has undermined this provision by underfunding the MAEP year after year. Low wealth school districts cannot overcome the loss of state funds; higher wealth districts even struggle to do so. In the previous public meeting, you said that it is the state's responsibility to equalize funding across districts. I hope that fact is central to your final recommendations.

Second, let's acknowledge that the base student cost is the MOST important number and how that cost is derived is the MOST important aspect of your plan. We need an objective, independent means of determining the base student cost, using a formula that takes into consideration annual inflation and increased demands on school districts, and avoids leaving the base student cost up to the changing winds of politics.

Third, Mississippi ranks 47<sup>th</sup> in per pupil spending. Whatever EdBuild recommends and the Legislature adopts will most certainly be judged by where it moves us on that ranking. The proof is in the pudding - if this is truly a sincere effort to improve opportunities for Mississippi's children, the result should be a dramatic improvement in our national ranking for per pupil funding. Our state leaders often say that the money just isn't there, Mississippi is a poor state and "we're doing the best we can." The truth is that the money we should be taking in as a state has been doled out to special interests for years. The snowballing of all those tax breaks to big business and out-of-state corporations has left Mississippi's small businesses and average families holding the bill for funding the public services of this state, including schools. EdBuild bears no responsibility for our state revenue, of course, but I'm asking you today to ignore the "we can't afford it" dictates you may be receiving from politicians, and put forth a proposal that gives children and schools what they need, not what politicians claim Mississippi can afford.

Cindy White  
Director of Communications  
The Parents' Campaign  
222 N. President Street, Suite 102  
Jackson, MS 39201

November 17, 2016

GOOD AFTERNOON. My name Rebecca Temple and have been a public school teacher in Mississippi since 1996. I am a National Board Certified Teacher, and I hold a Master's degree in English. Most importantly, I am the proud parent of three children who are students in the Madison County School District. I am here to show my support for fully funding an education program that supports our students in every aspect, from vocational to gifted, from alternative programs to transportation. With respect to an attempt to create a new formula, I have yet to be convinced our current formula is in need of revision.

Decades of research from the Center for Public Education show the "unequivocal connection between teacher quality and student learning." The study concluded with "three simple premises" about successful schools and advised:

"School reform cannot succeed unless it focuses on creating the conditions under which teachers can teach and teach well."

(<http://www.centerforpubliceducation.org/Main-Menu/Staffingstudents/Teacher-quality-and-student-achievement-At-a-glance/Teacher-quality-and-student-achievement-Research-review.html>)

I respectfully submit to you, leaders of our state, that the students of Mississippi, from elementary students to those seeking a higher education, should be given every opportunity to receive an education that will provide them with a path to success in their futures. This beautiful state, full of compassionate and strong people, deserves to be unified in equitable and quality education. Funding should be made to allow competitive salaries to attract effective teachers AND to retain them. Funding should be made to offer resources of texts, technology, and other services to "improve the conditions under which teachers can teach and teach well." We parents and teachers who model for our children the values of honesty and trustworthiness need to see our state leaders following these very values by funding the formula set forth for our public schools. While the Mississippi legislature continues to refuse funding a formula that benefits ALL of the state with an educational path to help our poverty levels shrink and quality of life in MS to rise, we parents and teachers are struggling to guide a future generation to recognize, understand, and respect the terms "integrity" and "equality."

The current MAEP formula is not a bad one – and it has yet to be implemented in any way over time to judge its efficacy. Any adjustments made to the formula should NOT cut any programs that are invaluable to the success of our school system. Since considerations for adjustments to the formula were requested, the formula could include a base cost that does not factor in average daily attendance but could instead be reflective of total enrollment for each district. In addition, changes in any funding formula should account for assistants, interventionists, and behavioral specialists.

Martin Luther King, Jr. stated: “The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character- that is the goal of true education.” I ask you, the members of our legislature, to allow the state of Mississippi’s students to see your character and allow them to build their intelligence. With fully funding MAEP, teachers, parents, and administrators can bring this great state out of its educational recession and allow it to reach for its fullest potential.

*EdBuild: Education Funding Formula Hearing*  
*November 17, 2016*

Good afternoon. I am Kelly Riley and I serve as the director of the Mississippi Professional Educators.

Our membership includes more than 13,800 educators throughout Mississippi.

In our annual membership survey this fall, 59% of participants identified education funding as the most pressing policy issue for the Mississippi Legislature.

The current MAEP formula has been referred to as being “broken,” yet it has only been fully funded twice.

Our members have shared with me the impact on their classrooms of the formula not being funded as required by state law. They have shared their frustrations with outdated classroom materials, a lack of technology, and increasing class sizes.

I offer the following with regards to a new formula:

1. Equity is critical, as too many of our local districts do not have a local tax base to provide the resources necessary to provide students with an effective education. The current formula was designed to ensure equity and equity must be an integral component of a new formula.
2. We must pay our educators for the professionals they are. Mississippi is facing a significant teacher shortage, as evidenced by our State Board designating 41 of our 144 districts as critical shortage areas. Retention is also an issue. Mississippi must attract and retain effective teachers, as research has repeatedly proven the impact of an effective teacher on student learning. A new formula should incorporate adjustments for not only educator salaries, but health insurance and retirement costs, as these are significant administrative expenses for districts.
3. The new funding formula should be based on Average Daily Membership rather than Average Daily Attendance. Our districts are responsible for having the staff, resources and infrastructure necessary for every student on their rolls every day of the school year, regardless of if that student is present.

4. I urge you to provide funding for technology – not only the hardware and software, but the infrastructure – so that technology may be an integral component of student learning.
5. A funding formula must incorporate support staff such as, but not limited to, counselors, behavioral specialists and interventionists who reinforce learning in today's student population which becomes more diverse each day.
6. An effective funding formula will keep pace with inflation, as well as additional initiatives or mandates that may be required by legislation.
7. Most importantly, an education funding formula should be based on what is best for students rather than political desire.

I urge you to hold additional hearings on this critical issue in the northern and southern parts of our state at times conducive for teachers and administrators.

In closing, I would like to share a comment I received last year from a member:

*Underfunding the vital element of education shows a serious disregard for the current and future progress of MS as a whole. It also shows an ignorance of the past and a failure to learn from what underfunding has brought to this state in terms of low literacy and math levels of all the states. The state's tax base is low because businesses will not locate in a state with an uneducated workforce; and that poorly educated workforce comes from decades of denying that funding education is an investment in the future! Without monetary resources devoted to education, the cycle of poverty and ignorance will continue to plague this state.*

Thank you.

11/17/2016

Comments on Edbild Education Formula

(Mississippi Center For Justice by Jeremy Eisler)

There are two critical components of any formula from our perspective.

First, it must be funded. That this input must be offered is unfortunate, but it is apparently necessary in light of this legislature's repeated failure to adequately fund the MAEP under both Democratic and Republican administrations and majorities. Without a commitment to adequate funding any formula is no more than insincere public relations.

Second, the base formula should provide for adequate adjustments to accurately reflect the additional costs attendant on educating students who require more than than basic expenditures , including but not limited to "At-Risk" children, SPED students, Voc-Ed Students, students with 504 plans, as well as adjusting for the costs related to those students who require transportation.

If these costs are not factored in to the formula the schools serving a disproportionate proportion of these students are short changed, while those schools not serving these students and incurring these additional costs experience an unmerited windfall. This not fair to the schools experiencing these costs, the children they are serving, or the local and state taxpayers who are shouldering the necessary burden of educating the next generation.

This issue of fiscal equity is particularly relevant when we consider Charter School phenomenon. Patrick Lencioni, the famous business author, in his best-selling book The Advantage laid out the Strategic Plan developed by one of his Charter School Clients. It included "lower staff pay than average public schools," "no transportation services," "standardize[d] core processes across all schools," and "no special education services." The Advantage, Pp. 116-117. Exhibit A.

It is obvious that if we continue with a high base standard student reimbursement rate that Charter Schools will reap an unearned windfall from their policies of excluding "At-Risk" and SPED students whose special needs preclude the "standardize[d] services" upon which their business model depends. They will in effect be paid for providing services they do not offer, to a population they neither serve nor transport.

Pity the public school whose low cost and easy to educate students have been cherry picked by a nearby Charter School, and which is left in consequence with inadequate funds to try and educate the high cost "At-Risk" and SPED students who require both transportation and non-standardized services. It is not fair to the school, the children, or the tax-payers.

# THE ADVANTAGE

Why Organizational Health  
Trumps Everything Else in Business



PATRICK LENCIONI



JOSSEY-BASS  
A Wiley Imprint  
[www.josseybass.com](http://www.josseybass.com)



In some cases, one of an organization's strategic anchors may not yet be on the list because it isn't part of what the organization is currently doing, so it needs to be added. That's why it's important for an organization to realize that the process of identifying strategic anchors should not be completely reactive or historical. Sometimes it is the very process of identifying strategic anchors that alerts an organization to the fact that what it is currently doing isn't right or isn't enough to ensure success and differentiation, and so a change is needed.

Another outcome of establishing strategic anchors is making it easier to agree on what an organization should *not* be doing.

### Strategic Schools

We worked with an organization that runs charter schools. As is true in many mission-driven organizations, there is a real temptation in schools for leaders to want to be all things to all people. Of course, with limited resources and high stakes, the cost of not being strategic is great.

The team started by creating an exhaustive list of everything that was currently true about the organization: focus on kindergarten through fifth grade, standardize core processes across all schools, headquarters in Texas, slightly lower staff pay than average public schools, emphasis on student safety, no transportation services provided, performance driven, data driven, no special education programs, emphasis on parent volunteerism and involvement, internal promotion of leaders, formative assessments, focus on benefit to kids, low cost, minimal branding and marketing, character-focused education, state-controlled pricing, distributed leadership model, local principal autonomy, no frills, employees passionate about mission.

After an hour of brainstorming and passionate debate, they arrived at the following strategic anchors: standardiza-



## Discipline 2: Create Clarity

tion of operations, selective marketing, performance and measurement driven. They decided that the way to ensure their success and differentiate from their competition was to ensure that every decision they made reflected (1) the ability to leverage standardized processes for efficiency and low cost, (2) to do only cost-effective, targeted marketing to parents in the micromarkets they served, and (3) to focus relentlessly on student achievement and parents' return on investment.

Those anchors also gave them the clarity about what they shouldn't do like provide transportation services and special education. As unhappy as they initially felt about those decisions, the leaders of the company knew that their ability to succeed in a competitive world meant they had to make difficult, strategic trade-offs.

Many leadership teams struggle with not wanting to walk away from opportunities that seem basically good and easily justifiable outside the context of having a strategy, but which would distract the

Many leadership teams struggle with not wanting to walk away from opportunities. Strategic anchors give them the clarity and courage to overcome these distractions and stay on course.

organization and pull it away from its stated intent. Strategic anchors give a leadership team the clarity and courage to overcome these distractions and stay on course.

Some people ask why there are three strategic anchors and not four or two or fifteen. Years ago I would have said, "Well, if you think having four or five works better for your organization, then go for it." But I've come to learn over the years, with the encouragement of clients and consultants who found it to be true, that there should be three

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**From:** Lauren Stubblefield  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2016 3:09 PM  
**To:**  
**Subject:** Fwd: Comments to print

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Lauren Stubblefield  
**Date:** November 17, 2016 at 2:00:22 PM CST  
**To:**  
**Subject:** Comments to print

My name is Lauren Wilkes Stubblefield. I am a proud graduate of Mississippi's Public Education system by way of the Vicksburg-Warren School District and MSMS. I am the mother of two recent Vicksburg graduates; I am the former Administrator of a Montessori School. Three minutes is not a very long time, so I'll get right to the point. I am not a stupid person, so when I say that there is nothing wrong with the MAEP formula as it stands, you should listen. The problem with Education funding in Mississippi is the allocation of funding itself; rather, the flagrant and intentional lack of funding provided by the Legislature over the past 18 years. There is no reason to spend time and dollars on this study, or on this contract with EdBuild, because the answer to the education problems in this State is not vouchers, it is not "school choice;" the clear, smart and simple answer to the education problems in Mississippi is for the Legislature to do its lawfully stipulated job and to fund the MAEP formula. The formula needs to be funded fully and consistently for five to seven years; then it might be prudent to re-evaluate it. There is no need for this political shell game to continue; there is no need for further shady contracts; there is no need for the current leadership to continue to insist on balancing the budget on the backs of Mississippi's school children – when they are, indeed, the most vulnerable constituents supposedly represented by the officials their parents elect.

Funding education in Mississippi is not rocket science; it's not complicated, and it should be the primary and overreaching goal for our esteemed leadership, because they are pretty smart, too, aren't they? The leadership and the Legislature need only follow the KISS principle: Keep It Simple, Stupid. There is no reason to further complicate, convolute, confuse or conflagrate. We are not sheep; we are not going to stand idly by; we graduates and parents are smart and saavy, and we know a bad deal when we see one. So our message to EdBuild is clear: Keep it Simple; fund the formula; don't be ~~stupid~~ <sup>foolish</sup>...some of us who made it through 12 years in Mississippi's schools are actually pretty clever and we see through these veiled attempts to defund, dismantle and privatize the public education system in this State. Do yourselves a favor and just stop here and now; stop wasting our time and our money; stop depriving our children of their education funding. Leave the formula alone and put your efforts into fully funding it instead, because it is ~~probably stupid~~ to try and fix something that's not even broken.

Unwise

We, the undersigned, are very concerned that the Legislature has not fully funded MAEP in recent years. Chronic under-funding has been a real problem for our school districts. Programs have been cut and class sizes have grown. Most importantly, it is increasingly difficult to attract and retain great teachers. As you study Mississippi schools and our school funding formula, we ask you to consider the following:

- Make this process transparent and include opportunities for parents, educators and community members to participate. Hold public meetings in other areas of the state. Send out surveys. Interview people in districts across the state.
- Be prepared to 'show your work' so that the public knows how you arrived at your recommendations.
- Make a commitment that the base student cost will be the same or greater than the base student cost in the current formula. We cannot afford to go backwards.
- Include a plan to keep pace with inflation, to gradually rise to the Southeast average.
- Consider special circumstances such as the needs of high growth districts and districts along the Coast. School districts on the Gulf Coast have insurance and utility increases that are beyond our control that really stress our budgets. Become familiar with the predicted rise in electricity costs in the MS Power Company service area.
- Ensure that students in low-wealth districts have funding similar to higher wealth districts.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment,

**Ocean Springs School District**

Shelby Bateman

Jaklyn Wrigley

Tammy and Mark Adams

Jason Payne

Robin Boswell

Julia Weaver

Tim and Marty Reynolds

Melissa Johnson

Andrea Pocreva

Cheryl Cooper

Lauren Thurman

Patricia O'Grady

Carrie Niolet

Joyce Blankenship

Tyler Smith

Hema Denham

Kristen Kahle

Michelle Smith

Rajini Thara

Viswanath Thara

Judith Denham

Sachika Denham

Sandra Camphor

Cynthia Ramseur

Mary Ann O'Gorman

Susan Mueller

Mayor Connie Moran

Jennifer Moffett

Judy Thurman

Heather and Henry Furr

Ann Duke

Melissa Johnson

Kikie Wright-Orrison

Amy Stuart Clifford

Jill and Calvin Taylor

Andrea Osman

Mona Loper

Carolyn Clark

Cecil George Smith

Lynn Brooks

Kathryn Shanks

Ali Leggett Robinson and Charlie Robertson

Wendy Hollingsworth

Linda Schroeder

Jane Moore

Laura Bowie

Joey Rice

Ellen Ellis Lee

Pamela and Richard Heard

Marta Williams

Jay Ritchie

Julie Cwikla

Lisa Pomeroy

Judi Altman

Pierce and Sylvia Blankenship

Dale Burgin

Ann Mead

Jessica Kastler

Bethany Fayard

**Biloxi School District**

Shasta Wood

Jennifer Pyron

**Gulfport School District**

Linda Elward

Becky Guidry

Christie Yoste

Christina and Reilly Morse

**Madison County School District**

Sissy Lynn

Ashley Parker

Jan Richardson

**Jackson Public School District**

Lynne Schneider

Linda Letherwood

April McKinley

**Starkville Oktibbeha School District**

Haley Montgomery

Leslie Fye

**Pearl Public School District**

Val Alley

Pam Johnson

**Jackson County School District**

Tara Skelton

**Vicksburg School District**

Lauren and Russell Stubblefield

**Oxford School District**

Cristen Hemmins

**Bay-Waveland**

Trent Favre

Edward Gibson

**Long Beach School District**

Beverly Davis

**Pascagoula School District**

Kay Sims

Petal High School

Jessica Dickinson

Earlier this year I visited the XQ Super School traveling exhibit that came to Jackson and was at the Mississippi Children's Museum. If you're not familiar this is an initiative funded by Lorana Powell Jobs, widow of a former Apple CEO Steve Jobs. XQ focuses on crowdsourcing ideas to create a "high school for the 21st-century." They preface this by detailing how that with all of the technological innovations and societal evolution that has occurred during the 20th century, it is detrimental that high school education in particular has actually changed very little over the last 100 years. While I think this is somewhat of an overstatement, the idea behind it certainly has merit and I think is applicable to what we are asked to comment on here today.

I'm not speaking for or against the current MAEP formula and I'm not even really advocating any specific changes in the formula per se- except that it be student centric focused. What I would like to emphasize is that I think there is inherent good in evaluating the formula vis-à-vis our current environment and determining if it is still applicable and optimized for success.

MAEP is almost 2 decades old. Throughout most of the last century a framework would still be relevant over that timeframe. However we all know the sea change that has occurred over the past really 10 years much less 20 years. This is especially true in the areas of technological advancements, workforce change, and even really change in the classroom. Technical aspects such as what we have with 1 to 1 initiative or even - to get down in the weeds - smart boards - did not exist 20 years ago when MAEP was written. This is not to say that these aspects can't fit into the formula now, but I do think that it's more beneficial to look at our educational environment and today's educational tools available to coupled with workforce demands both present and future, and determined that if what we have on the books is not just sufficient but optimal to meet these needs.

I hope that the very act of looking at this formula can be non-controversial. We can all have a different opinions on on how it should be changed, funded, or left alone - hopefully supported by facts - and the best results will come out of this

of this process. But I do think that it's something that we should re-examine not just this one time, but on a regular basis. It doesn't appear that change in the world and the workplace will slow down anytime soon, and it's our responsibility to evaluate and adapt our education funding formula as often as necessary. Thank you for your time.

*Mandatory  
review in the  
process*



As a teacher for four years in a critical needs high poverty school, I could stand here and tell you what *my* students at *my* school lacked, but I won't. That's unfair to the other schools in the state whose needs and concerns are not represented here today. Instead, I urge EdBuild representatives as well as the members <sup>and CHAIRPERSONS</sup> of the House and Senate Education Committees to go into their communities and seek input from those who will be directly impacted by these changes: the students, parents, teachers, and staff of Mississippi's public schools.

Until you visit these schools, you cannot understand what it's like to teach and learn in a decrepit and unsafe environment. You cannot know what it's like to have over 150 students trying to share 28 books published during the Clinton administration at a school with no copy machine. You cannot fathom trying to learn Spanish or Chemistry from a computer program because your school cannot find or retain qualified teachers. You cannot experience what it's like to not use a water fountain or bathroom all day because they don't work. But public school students, teachers, and school staff live those realities, and that is why you must speak with them, hear their concerns, and act on their behalf.

By electing you, your communities trust that you will fulfill their wants and wishes as a member of the state legislature. Changing MAEP gives each and every one of you a chance to earn that trust and demonstrate your dedication to the success of students, parents, teachers and communities. How you change that formula is ultimately your decision, and given the legislature's proclivity for privacy, we likely won't know what those changes are until they're already law.

Before making those changes, you must reach out to your constituents and seek their input. That formula affects their lives every day. They are the ones you're here to represent, and if you're not willing to create opportunities for them to share their ideas and concerns, you're not worthy to get their vote. Governor William Winter has oft said, "the only road out of poverty runs by the schoolhouse door," but if that schoolhouse door is busted, that schoolhouse ceiling is falling in, that schoolhouse has no resources for students, and those schoolhouse teachers are underpaid, undertrained, and overburdened, how far along that road can we actually go? If this state wants to move forward economically, it must invest in its public schools. The first step to that is writing an MAEP formula that benefits ALL of Mississippi's students. Y'all are the ones writing the formula. Get out there and find out what your people need in it.

# What is the yield of equity funding?

November 17, 2016

The MAEP formula, aimed to fund schools at a 'midlevel academic standard', was introduced in 1997 and has been funded only twice since. If we examine fully funding the current MAEP model, what would we see?

- School districts that successfully meet the required accountability standards
- Teacher positions and school programs that are secured
- Increase Graduation Rates
- Decrease Dropout Rates
- Students prepared for college
- Student performance on standardized test would improve
- Career-ready workforce

Equity funding should be our top priority in the state of Mississippi because the students today are our future leaders, but how can they lead if they are not prepared?

Examining the issue of school-funding where funding is heavily weighted on local property taxes presents the problem that property values vary greatly community to community and district to district.

We must strive for equity funding in this state to ensure a quality, equitable education for all children regardless of their race, class, gender, special need or zip code by increasing the at risk funding to 114% in and above the base student cost.

To receive a good yield we must sow a good seed and that seed is equity funding for all of the children in the state of Mississippi.

**Rachel Mayes** | Executive Director  
SOUTHERN ECHO INC.

Melissa Johnson

Ocean Springs, MS

Ocean Springs School District

Thank you for the opportunity to speak at this public hearing for the overhauling of MAEP. I am a retired educator and am interested in helping my state to have the best educational system it can for every child in the state.

I am fortunate in that I am retired and have the flexibility to drive halfway across the state on a work afternoon to attend a meeting that was announced 72 hours prior, but many of your stakeholders are not here because they are not in my position. Any working group, including EdBuild gains from as much information as it can get. To that end I have several suggestions:

- Hold more meetings
- Hold them in different parts of the state
- Hold them in the evenings (so that more people can attend including teachers)
- Give adequate notice (more than 3 days – perhaps 10-14 days)
- Publish the meetings in news sources
- Hold them in public places
- Send out surveys for input from parents and teachers

An hour is hardly enough time for you to hear the desires and concerns of the entire state. The original MAEP took years and a lot of careful thought to formulate. Input was sought from a wide range public servants, parents, and teachers. When it was reviewed under Governor Barbour the review took months and again gathered data and preferences from the people of Mississippi. The process to be valid must have accountability and transparency.

There is a lot of money at stake here, \$2.2 billion dollars of all our tax money. Far more important than the money are the 495,000 school children of this state. Each one of them deserves the very best we can do for them. They deserve a fine education. It will take all our efforts. It will take time and input from as many of their parents and teachers as you can get. If you want to hear from them you have to make it a lot easier for them to speak.

a friend of mine who's a teacher asked me to read their statement today because they are still with their students at practice:

the solution to the educational failure in MS is not easy nor is it cheap, but it **MUST** be approached from a long term perspective.

the failing schools in mississippi are lacking two things - infrastructure and human capital

School buildings over a certain number of years old should be evaluated, and if designated as dilapidated, or not meeting the basic needs of children, they need to be on a list to be renovated and rebuilt on a rolling basis, as quickly as possible.

This is a must. We have to meet our student's basic needs - shelter from the elements, running water, safety, space in a classroom -first. We should focus on buildings because all the tech in the world won't help if the windows are busted out and the water fountains and toilets don't work.

Closing schools is not productive - it closes what is, in many communities in mississippi, the only community space in the area. also, if you close schools then you have to bus the students to and from longer distances, and busing is a whole different infrastructure and safety issue.

teacher SHORTAGE (dusty said pronounce this clearly cause it's important and he missed it) is at crisis level in the whole country, and especially in mississippi; we need housing subsidies for teachers willing to move to and work in failing school districts.

We should recruit within our state universities even more than we already do - offer loan forbearance and forgiveness for teachers in the state for example. We must invest in university education programs that put teachers into mississippi public schools.

Teachers and other personnel - janitors, cafeteria workers, bus drivers - need a competitive wage, so we can hire good personnel and afford to lose the bad.

mostly, I would recommend that anyone working with public school funding allocation physically visit some of our failing schools - sit in the classrooms and ask yourselves if you could work in that environment. use the bathrooms and water fountains and ask if you would be comfortable there. meet the students, teachers, cafeteria workers, and custodial staff who spend every day there, and ask them what they need most to be more effective at their job.

yes, read the mde reports, but also visit the schools yourselves.

Realize the humanity involved in the task you approach, and act accordingly.

**My name is Russ Latino. I am the State Director of Americans for Prosperity Mississippi. On behalf of the 19,806 Mississippians who have taken action with AFP and our 2.8 million activists nationwide, I want to thank Chairman Moore, Chairman Tollison and the members of their respective committees for their leadership in this process.**

**As EdBuild goes about the task given and the Legislature receives and considers recommendations, there are a few points we'd ask you to bear in mind.**

**First, decisions should be made on empirical evidence and not empty rhetoric. It is false that Mississippi is not investing in public education. In FY 2013, we spent \$3.2 billion (\$800 million federal), excluding IHL. In FY 2017, we spent \$3.45 billion (\$800 million federal, excluding IHL. That's a \$250 million increase in five years. For our population and relative wealth, our state's investment is far outpacing many surrounding states.**

**Second, we should have an accurate understanding of the tax burden. Over the last five years revenue and fee collections in MS have increased by almost \$800 million annually. Tax collection, spending and debt have all substantially outpaced inflation. Income growth has not. Those dollars are coming out of waitresses' tip jars, mechanics' coffee cans and retirees nest eggs. In balancing wants, we must not forget that.**

Third, local communities should be free to support their schools. Educators should have increased flexibility and options and so should parents and students. Most of us can agree that top-down, one-size-fits-all education is not putting our kids first.

Lastly, so much of education's public policy debate glosses over a hard truth. While there may be ways to mitigate, nothing replaces parental engagement as the leading indicator of a student's success. There may be times in these considerations where we have to remind ourselves that government cannot fix everything and instead focus on being efficacious on those things we can and should.

We all want better educations and opportunities for our children and grand children. How we get there is important, as ~~is the balancing that must take place with multiple priorities.~~ We urge you to avoid falling into polemic debate, instead focus on balancing the removal of barriers to opportunity for our children and the protection of a somewhat beleaguered tax base.

### **Public Comments on EdBuild Review of MAEP formula**

I'm Nancy Looe, director of The Parents' Campaign, an organization of more than 64,000 Mississippians who work to support and strengthen our public schools. Of all the issues we champion, school funding is what they care about most. They are watching this process closely.

EdBuild advocates for equitable school funding. If you have studied the history of the Mississippi Adequate Education Program, you no doubt are aware that its adoption made us a national leader in equity funding.

You call for a funding system that begins with a base cost and adds funding for additional needs. The MAEP does that.

You say school funding is arbitrary. What makes Mississippi school funding arbitrary is our lawmakers' failure to follow our formula.

You claim that school funding formulas are antiquated. Ours is designed specifically to evolve over time to keep pace with inflation and new demands placed on schools.

So our members question why this revamp is needed. Understandably, there is skepticism. Our state leadership's refusal to release the details of your contract has exacerbated that skepticism.

You are being paid with our tax dollars to do a job that affects our children's lives. Here is what we ask of you:

Be transparent. Reveal the details of your contract. Make public all of your exchanges with legislators and state leaders and every recommendation you make in regard to this effort.

Be true to your principles. You say student funding should be based on need. Mississippi students have greater needs than students in any other state, but our per student funding is among the lowest. Your recommendations should change that.

Set a clear bar for our Legislature. Parents deserve to know how well our legislators are upholding their duty to provide adequate funding for our children's education. We now have an objective formula that allows us to measure legislators' effort against their obligation. We need a measuring stick.

You question whether student funding is fair from one part of our state to the next. The truth is that there is not a single public school student in this state who is receiving fair funding. And Mississippi parents are tired of excuses and empty promises from our Legislature. Hundreds of thousands of us have signed petitions; we have marched on the Capitol; we have called, written, and met with our legislators countless times, all to no avail.

I don't know if you wake up in the middle of the night worried about the children who have no one at home who can help them with their homework or who arrive at school hungry and sleepy and unable to concentrate because of circumstances they cannot control, but we do.

The only real hope for a decent future these children have rests with our public schools. A voucher scheme that allows private academies to pick and choose who gets educated will never serve these children. Public funds are for public schools. If we are in any way a decent people, we will make sure that our public schools are well equipped to provide all children what they need.



## Public Input on School Funding Formula

MS Legislature, 11/17/16

Because of advances in computers, we have at our fingertips more data on which to base policy decisions than we have ever had in the past. Highly trained social scientists – economists, in particular – at some of our country's leading universities have published studies that have called into question one of the very basic tenets of our democracy: and that is that a free, public education can provide equality of opportunity to all the children in our great land. We know from these studies that children born to families in poverty in high-poverty communities have but a miniscule chance over their lifetimes to move into a different income band than that to which they were born. This, more than anything, makes a lie of the American Dream. If we believe in equality of opportunity, we are right to locate its best prospect in our system of free, public education for children. For, it is in that, and that alone, that we can transform the lives of individual children, of families, of communities, of our state, and of our nation. So, how do we build a free, public education that truly serves every child? By using a basis for the allocation of public resources that takes as its

## **Public Comment Address for Input on School Funding for Legislature**

Hello my name is Marilyn L. Young, I am the Education Director for Southern Echo, Inc. I am a lifelong resident of Tunica County, Mississippi. My address is 1350 Livingston Lane, Jackson, MS 39213. I am a warrior and servant for public education. Southern Echo has been doing this education policy work for 26 years in Mississippi and the Southeastern region. I have been working to organize community around public education for a little over 30 years.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to make public comments on this very important issue of revamping the MAEP formula. We have had the MAEP formula for 19 years and it has only been fully funded twice. Before the Legislators change the MAEP formula, they should fully fund the existing MAEP formula for the next several years. This is very important, because you need educational data to assess if the MAEP formula is working properly or not.

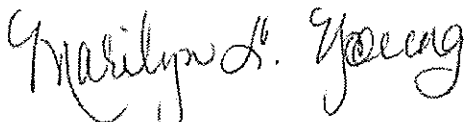
However, if the Mississippi Legislators decide to create a new education funding formula they certainly should base it on the educational needs of the students and their communities. The formula should include money for low wealth students, student that are ELL (English Language Learners,) students with special need services, and high achieving students. The proposed new formula should also include additional funding for At-risk students, transportations, building funds, and deprived and distress communities who do not have the millage rate to generate the necessary funds needed locally. The new proposed revised MAEP funding formula should be at the JUSTICE funding level. Which we will be glad to sit down with you and discuss JUSTICE funding. At the very least, the At-risk component of the new education funding formula should be at the level of 119% as it was suggested from the Augenblick Study of MAEP that was done several years ago by the Legislative Task force.

Also, I would like to add that Mississippi Department of Education and their resources be a part of any education funding formula revamp. MDE knows what is happening inside of education in the state of Mississippi. Specially, the Mississippi Department of Education knows what is happening in our local school districts and

they know our local district needs. MDE needs to be an active engage member at this education table.

In closing, we are highly recommending that whatever new education funding formula that comes out that it will funding for a 12<sup>th</sup> grade high-quality first-rate education for our students and community in the state of Mississippi. We are also requesting that grassroots community based organizations like Southern Echo and others be a part of this education funding formula revamping process.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marilyn L. Young". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Marilyn L. Young  
Education Director,  
Southern Echo, Inc.

Also, a Concerned Mother, Grandmother, and Advocate for Community!



# MISSISSIPPI ASSOCIATION OF EDUCATORS

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CHRISTOPHER STEVENS  
VICE-PRESIDENT

ERICA WEBBER-JONES  
SECRETARY-TREASURER

DR. CONNIE HUTCHISON  
INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

November 17, 2016

Good afternoon. My name is Joyce Helmick. As a grandmother, educator, and President of the Mississippi Association of Educators, I am deeply committed to the success of every student.

Our members are raising grave concerns about the real intent of revamping the state's funding formula, which was created to ensure public education funding would be equitable throughout Mississippi. Elected officials have failed to finance this equitable funding for 16 of the 18 years this formula has been in existence.

Educators are extremely concerned that State leaders have brought in a New Jersey company whose CEO is on record encouraging states to starve public schools into bankruptcy.

Deliberately bankrupting our public schools hurts our students *and* their hardworking educators. This same CEO also stated that "when a school district goes bankrupt, all of their legacy debt can be eliminated." Legacy debt typically includes retirement to which teachers, administrators and other staff contribute. If a goal, or even a potential consequence of this committee's work is to eliminate retirement for school employees, this must be part of the public debate.

The quality of public schools is critical to the stability, development, and economic prosperity of our communities. Deliberately bankrupting our public schools hurts everyone, students, school employees, and the entire community.

As our leaders, you possess a moral and legal obligation to provide the resources that our public school students need for success. We already have a funding formula that we believe, if adequately funded, would allow even our lowest performing students to thrive.

Our members are also gravely concerned that this New Jersey company has been brought in to turn our public schools into charter schools. I want to remind you that public schools are required to accept and retain every child, regardless of ability or disability. Charter schools accept and retain those students they choose. "Reforming" our public system into an unregulated group of charter schools will further segregate our students, not just by race and income, but by intelligence and talent.

As President of the MAE I have been in schools in every corner of our state, in schools where students have all the technology they need to learn, and in schools where, forget about technology, there are not even enough textbooks for each student.

I urge each of you to visit classrooms in several districts and talk to our members. Ask teachers, administrators and students what they need to succeed.

And before you pay a New Jersey company to revamp Mississippi's school funding formula, I urge you to fully fund the Mississippi Adequate Education Program, the formula designed by Mississippi stakeholders, before you declare it a failure.

November 17, 2016

My name is Carol Redfield. I am also speaking on behalf of Jacqueline Griffin, President of the Jackson Association of Educators. Because the public hearing on education funding is scheduled during school hours she is unable to attend.

As a mother, educator, and member of the Mississippi Association of Educators, I believe in public education. I also believe in transparency in government

Why is this process being conducted with so little public engagement? Why is the contract to a New Jersey organization that has no stake in the future of any of our students being done secretly? Why are you rushing to revamp a funding formula that has been dangerously underfunded since its creation in 1997? The only failure is the failure of state leaders to fund our students' public education each and every year, year in and year out, as the equity formula had been designed.

You can change cars all day long but without gas in the tank, none of them will work.

Just as a car needs gas in the tank, our public schools need equitable funding to provide for the resources every student needs to succeed – resources to ensure that all students, regardless of their zip code, have access to a great PUBLIC education.

The CEO of the out of state organization that you have brought in actually encourages you to bankrupt our public schools so that others can swoop in and make a profit off the backs of our children's public education. This is outrageous, wrong, and immoral.

The New Jersey organization gave State Leaders a \$125,000 break in their contract costs. Why? What's in it for them?

As a taxpayer, I would like to know what exactly is in their contract, but State Leaders have made the contract secret, kept away from Mississippi citizens like me who expect the best and most transparent behavior from our public officials.

That is what we teach our students – that America's government is transparent and accountable to the people it serves. THAT is the American way. Our great Magnolia state is part of this great nation. As a mother, a citizen, educator, and member of MAE, I recommend that you fully fund the public education equity formula and do so each and every year. This is how all students, regardless of their zip code, will have the resources that they need to succeed and thrive. Thank you.

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**From:** J Richert  
**Sent:** Monday, November 07, 2016 7:58 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** school funding

Hello,

What type of ideas are you looking for?

As a start, I would say try funding MAEP for five years. The formula has been created and then assessed by a bi-partisan group again, in its long, underfunded history.

I don't understand what a student-based formula is, as opposed to resource-based formula, mentioned in the release.

The press release asking for input is very vague. My best hope is we elect public officials who don't continue to cut taxes, leaving us with no adequate way to run our state.

Jan Richardson



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**From:** Navraj Batra  
**Sent:** Monday, November 07, 2016 11:50 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance

My name is Navraj Batra. My opinion for school funding is that the website KhanAcademy.com should be used in Mississippi's public schools. Thank you for your help. ✓

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**From:** Tony Presley  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 08, 2016 12:19 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** school funding

I would like to begin by stating that I am neither Democrat or Republican. I try to vote for the person that I feel matches my beliefs and values. However, it's getting harder to find those people anymore.

You in the legislature and executive branch have completely forgotten how to listen and respect the 'other' side's opinion and have especially forgotten how to compromise in order to get things accomplished. We are all tired of the attitude "our way or the highway" that the leaders of the legislative branch has today.

Saying that, I don't see why you want to change the funding if you have only adequately funded the schools twice in over a decade. How do you know if fully funding with the current formula doesn't accomplish our goals? I agree that there is probably some fat to cut out on the administrative side of education. However, why not look to school consolidation as one of the options to make our schools more efficient? I guess it is too political for the legislator to pass the necessary bills to force school consolidation on those districts who wants to keep 5 or 6 high schools with a graduation rate of 10 to 20 students. You were elected to do make these types of hard decisions.

Why not listen to the state's education personnel (ie. State Superintendent of Education, Higher Learning and educators themselves) about the funding? They are experts in educating students. It makes sense to me for them to have a lot of input in this topic and not anyone in the legislature who doesn't have any expertise in the subject.

I beg you not to change the formula and give it a chance to work. Then, after a few years, if the quality of education has not approved, then look at changing it.

**William A. (Tony) Presley**

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**From:** brooks townsend  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 08, 2016 12:48 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** School funding...

You're asking for input on how to better fund schools? you're kidding right? why would I say that?....consider this...the city of Houston TX has more students than the entire state of ms....guess how many superintendents it has...if you guessed more than ONE you are incorrect...so, guess where our school tax \$\$ goes...to fund these little pet jobs in every county and city....come on...you guys know this...what's really going on??

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

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**From:** Harold Leonard  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 08, 2016 12:53 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** School Funding

The state is spending too much money on Public Schools. Cut spending on Public Schools and Cut every agency that gets my tax money. Start by cutting back 1/4 of what they got last year. Cut the salaries of all the legislators as well. You get the state pocketbook back in line the same way you do in a household. You cannot spend your way out of debt. STOP SPENDING money you do not have. STOP digging into your savings. That is for real emergency like storms that will come again someday. This is not complicated.

Harold Leonard

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**From:** Robert Fort  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 08, 2016 3:17 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** FW: Education Funding  
**Attachments:** District Funding.pdf; maep\_explanation\_2010C2281CA29877.pdf

I sent this back last December – it is still pertinent.

Robert Fort

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**From:** Robert Fort  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 03, 2015 12:53 PM  
**To:** 'jsmith@house.ms.gov' <jsmith@house.ms.gov>; 'ltgov@senate.ms.gov' <ltgov@senate.ms.gov>; 'pgunn@house.ms.gov' <pgunn@house.ms.gov>; 'cyounger@senate.ms.gov' <cyounger@senate.ms.gov>  
**Cc:** 'mail@seethespending.org' <mail@seethespending.org>; 'gallo@supertalk.fm' <gallo@supertalk.fm>  
**Subject:** Education Funding

Gentleman,

I am a parent of two public school children in the Lowndes County School District. I am an accountant by profession and have been a CFO for a restaurant management company for 25 years. During the recent debates regarding Initiative 42, I found myself looking deep into the funding the State of Mississippi provides for education. I was very much against I42, but do feel that funding for education definitely needs to be addressed in the upcoming legislative session. Below are some comments and observations that I have. Sources for my information are (1) State of Mississippi Budget Bulletin compiled 05/01/2015, (2) seetheschoolspending.org website, and (3) other State of Mississippi websites.

- **Appropriations.**

For fiscal year 2016 general fund appropriations were \$2,271,539,645 (39.78%) for K-12 and \$824,078,671 (14.43%) for higher education. A total of 54.21% of general fund appropriations. These are figures I am sure you are well aware of. There is a tremendous amount of money being spent on education, but we are not seeing results.

- **Number of School Districts.**

There are 148 school districts in Mississippi. That is 148 districts that have separate school boards and separate administrations that need funds. This needs to be addressed. I would propose 82 districts, one for each county.

- **Allocation of Funds.**

See attached district funding document. This is from 2013 data and lists local funding, state funding, federal funding, assessed value, and funds per student. What jumps out at me are the counties shaded in green. These counties rank in the top 10 of assessed value, but get a large % of state funding. Desoto county in particular receives 55.44% of their total funding from the state and 35.58% from local

sources. This is a MAJOR problem. Counties that can afford to provide education funding from local sources should be forced to increase their milage rate.

- MAEP formula.

Should be scrapped. I am an accountant and could not understand how this formula works. I like looking at the appraised value of a district – independent of educational pressures. There is a definite need to provide state funds to districts that don't have a milage base to pull from.

- Quality Teachers.

I have several friends that are in administrative positions that have said "you can't fire a teacher". Even in my personal experience with our children's teachers – there are some very quality teachers, but there are some that need to be replaced. We will not have quality education for our children until there are quality teachers. Pay them more and hold them accountable.

Thank you in advance to your time and consideration. Now that I42 has been defeated, it is time for you, our legislators, to provide a better educational system for our children.

Sincerely,

Robert Fort  
Caledonia, MS

## Mississippi Adequate Education Program (MAEP)

MS Code Sections: 37-151-1; 37-151-5; 37-151-6; 37-151-79;

37-151-81; 37-151-83; and 37-151-85

### What is MAEP?

The state formula used to establish adequate current operation funding levels necessary for the programs of each school district to meet a successful level of student performance as established by the State Board of Education using current statistically relevant state assessment data.

### Purpose:

Ensure that every Mississippi Child regardless of where he/she lives is afforded an adequate educational opportunity, as defined by the State Accountability System.

### MAEP FUNDING FORMULA:

1.  $ADA \times \text{Base Student Cost} + \text{At-Risk Component} - \text{Local Contribution} + 8\% \text{ Guarantee} = \text{MAEP Formula Allocation}$
2.  $\text{MAEP Formula Allocation} + \text{Add-on Programs} = \text{Total MAEP District Funding}$

## Base Student Cost Calculation

- District selection process.

Districts determined to be successful and efficient in four areas of school operations are selected for determining the base student cost.

Successful – a successful district is defined by the State Board of Education using current statistically relevant state assessment data.

Efficient - In each of the following Efficiency Components a MEAN for all school districts is determined (but only those district that meet successful status and above are selected for the cost component calculations.)

1. Instruction – Teachers per 1,000 students
2. Administration – Administrator/Staff ratio
3. Maintenance and Operations
  - a) M&O spending per 100,000 square feet; and
  - b) Maintenance staff per 100,000 square feet
4. Ancillary – Librarians and Counselors per 1,000 students

- Districts that are one standard deviation above and two standard deviations below the mean for each component are considered efficient.
- Districts that are both successful and efficient are used to calculate the average cost for each component.
- By law, the average cost for each component is calculated using expenditure data from the second preceding year.

(Example: For the FY '09 calculation, FY '07 expenditure data is used.)

- THE AVERAGE COST OF THE FOUR COMPONENTS ARE ADDED TOGETHER TO OBTAIN THE BASE STUDENT COST.
- To provide stability for appropriation and budgeting purposes, the base student cost will be calculated every four years rather than each year.
- An inflation adjustment is computed in the years between recalculation by multiplying 40% of the base student cost times the current inflation rate as computed by the State's economist.
- Example: FY 08 BSC X 40% X CPI = FY 09 Inflation Component

$\$4,574 \times .40 \times .03$  (3% inflation rate) = \$54

In this example, for FY 09, \$54 would be added to the FY 08 BSC to arrive at FY 09 BSC of \$4,519.

Once the Base Student Cost is determined, district allocations are calculated using the following formula:

ADA x Base Student Cost + At-risk Component - Local Contribution + 8 %  
Guarantee = MAEP District Allocation

#### AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE:

- GRADES K-12 MONTHS 2-3 OF PRECEDING YEAR
- EXCLUDES SELF-CONTAINED SPECIAL EDUCATION ADA
- HIGH GROWTH COMPONENT - For any district that has a consistent growth in ADA over the 3-year period prior to the appropriation, the average percent of growth in ADA over those 3 years is added to the ADA for that district.



#### AT RISK COMPONENT:

- 5% OF THE BASE STUDENT COST MULTIPLIED BY THE NUMBER OF FREE LUNCH PARTICIPANTS ON OCTOBER 31 OF PRECEDING YEAR.
- AS THE BASE STUDENT COST INCREASES THE AMOUNT FOR AT-RISK INCREASES
- ADDED INTO TOTAL BEFORE CALCULATION OF THE LOCAL CONTRIBUTION

#### LOCAL CONTRIBUTION:

- USES 2<sup>ND</sup> PRECEDING YEAR'S DATA
- REDUCED BY AD VALOREM TAX REDUCTION GRANTS
- YIELD FROM 28 MILLS + AD VALOREM IN LIEU PAYMENTS
- CAPPED AT 27% OF THE PROGRAM COSTS INCLUDING THE AT-RISK COMPONENT

#### 8% GUARANTEE:

- Incorporated to ensure that a district receives a formula allocation of at least what they received in 2002 plus 8%.

#### Add-On Programs:

1. Transportation
2. Special Education
3. Gifted Education
4. Vocational Education
5. Alternative Education

#### TRANSPORATION:

- Determined by the ADA of transported students in a school district.
- The allowable cost per student is calculated by using a rate table approved by the State Board of Education which associates the rate allowed to the transported density of the district.
- Density is determined by dividing transported ADA by the total square miles in the district. The lower the density, the higher the rate. The higher the density, the lower the rate. The total amount of transportation funding allowed is dictated by the State Legislature. The total of all district transportation funding cannot exceed the amount appropriated for such purpose.

- Additional special education and vocational transportation allotment is administered by the Deputy Superintendent, Office of School Building and Transportation, and is interfaced with the Office of Educational Accountability, Office of School Financial Services' funding calculation.

#### SPECIAL EDUCATION:

- A teacher unit is added for each approved program for exceptional students, with funding based on certification and experience of the approved teacher. Program approval criteria and special education teacher units are administered through the Office of Instructional Programs & Services, Office of Special Services and is interfaced with the Office of Educational Accountability, Office of School Financial Services' funding calculation.

#### GIFTED EDUCATION:

- A teacher unit is added for each approved program for gifted (artistic, intellectual, academic) students, with funding based on certification and experience of the approved teacher. Program approval criteria and gifted teacher units are administered through the Office of Instructional Programs & Services, Office of Academic Education and are interfaced with the Office of Educational Accountability, Office of School Financial Services' funding calculation.
- The 1993 Legislature mandated that beginning with 1993-94 each school district will have an intellectual gifted program. The mandate begins with grade 2 and increased by one grade each year until grade 6 is mandated in 1997-98. No other programs or grades are mandated and the mandate applies to intellectual programs in grades 2-6 only.

#### VOCATIONAL EDUCATION:

- One-half (1/2) teacher unit is added for each approved vocational program, with funding based on certification and experience of approved teacher. Program approval criteria and vocational education teacher units are administered through the Office of Vocational-Technical Education and is interfaced with the Office of Educational Accountability, Office of School Financial Services' funding calculation.

#### ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL PROGRAMS:

- Three quarters of one percent (0.75%) of the district's ADA (grades 1-12, elementary and secondary special education self-contained and ungraded) or 12 students, whichever is greater, is multiplied by the statewide average per pupil expenditure in public funds for the immediately preceding school year.

<p><b>MAEP Formula Allocation + Add-On Programs = Total MAEP District Funding</b></p>
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2013 District Data													
State % minus Local % is greater than 40% (State pulling a greater load) Districts that rank in the top 20 of assessed value, but the State % minus Local % is greater than 10% (Local not pulling enough of the load)													
District	Local Funds	%	State Funds	%	Federal Funds	%	Total Funds	Assessed Value	Rank	Students	Per Student	Total Funds	State Minus Local
Aberdeen	\$5,289,602	36.23%	\$6,501,582	44.53%	\$2,808,222	19.24%	\$14,599,405	\$96,276,544	71	1332	\$10,960	\$10,960	8.30%
Alcorn County	\$7,445,437	25.46%	\$18,025,935	61.65%	\$3,769,078	12.89%	\$29,240,450	\$131,563,145	51	3305	\$8,847	\$8,847	36.18%
Amite County	\$3,287,564	29.67%	\$5,220,857	47.11%	\$2,573,291	23.22%	\$11,081,713	\$84,230,666	84	1015	\$10,919	\$10,919	17.45%
Amory	\$3,092,752	21.49%	\$8,894,167	61.81%	\$2,403,067	16.70%	\$14,389,986	\$77,393,173	96	1724	\$8,346	\$8,346	40.32%
Attala County	\$4,278,614	37.43%	\$5,270,876	46.11%	\$1,882,091	16.46%	\$11,431,581	\$86,875,817	82	999	\$11,439	\$11,439	8.68%
Baldwyn	\$3,138,129	37.13%	\$3,922,086	46.41%	\$1,391,234	16.46%	\$8,451,448	\$51,801,761	121	798	\$10,596	\$10,596	9.28%
Bay St. Louis-Waveland	\$8,927,818	40.92%	\$8,570,987	39.28%	\$4,320,432	19.80%	\$21,819,237	\$178,746,329	36	1893	\$11,590	\$11,590	(1.64%)
Benoit	\$1,078,395	34.17%	\$1,303,141	41.29%	\$774,824	24.55%	\$3,156,360	\$23,299,895	140	242	\$13,039	\$13,039	7.12%
Benton County	\$1,555,929	12.77%	\$6,653,291	54.61%	\$3,973,923	32.62%	\$12,183,143	\$36,929,266	130	1186	\$10,276	\$10,276	41.84%
Biloxi	\$29,589,336	51.06%	\$21,684,771	37.42%	\$6,674,914	11.52%	\$57,949,021	\$544,002,430	8	5036	\$11,507	\$11,507	(13.64%)
Booneville	\$2,663,044	27.02%	\$6,196,986	62.88%	\$994,644	10.09%	\$9,854,673	\$44,381,695	125	1215	\$8,112	\$8,112	35.86%
Brookhaven	\$9,061,762	35.47%	\$12,899,556	50.49%	\$3,587,699	14.04%	\$25,549,017	\$159,018,514	40	2745	\$9,308	\$9,308	15.02%
Calhoun County	\$3,906,945	19.61%	\$12,511,267	62.80%	\$3,504,420	17.59%	\$19,922,632	\$81,022,339	89	2317	\$8,600	\$8,600	33.19%
Canton	\$9,493,962	33.05%	\$13,413,079	46.69%	\$5,822,718	20.27%	\$28,729,758	\$278,294,505	20	3097	\$9,276	\$9,276	13.64%
Carroll County	\$2,348,302	27.87%	\$4,519,042	53.63%	\$1,559,339	18.50%	\$8,426,683	\$73,792,423	98	909	\$9,267	\$9,267	25.76%
Chickasaw County	\$655,531	14.49%	\$3,034,797	67.06%	\$834,963	18.45%	\$4,525,291	\$10,991,395	147	513	\$8,818	\$8,818	52.58%
Choctaw County	\$5,203,249	35.85%	\$6,974,080	48.05%	\$2,335,404	16.09%	\$14,512,733	\$63,934,251	109	1385	\$10,477	\$10,477	12.20%
Claiborne County	\$4,700,085	30.71%	\$7,500,015	49.00%	\$3,106,192	20.29%	\$15,306,292	\$58,444,571	114	1576	\$9,714	\$9,714	18.29%
Clarksdale	\$4,516,373	15.40%	\$16,166,299	55.13%	\$8,639,346	29.46%	\$29,322,018	\$70,432,703	103	2930	\$10,009	\$10,009	39.73%
Clay County	\$753,855	33.61%	\$960,014	42.80%	\$529,201	23.59%	\$2,243,070	\$15,658,777	145	138	\$16,285	\$16,285	9.19%
Cleveland	\$9,765,094	31.56%	\$15,353,109	49.62%	\$5,821,109	18.81%	\$30,939,312	\$180,213,135	35	3475	\$8,902	\$8,902	18.06%
Clinton	\$15,374,759	40.07%	\$19,579,653	50.90%	\$3,465,873	9.03%	\$38,370,285	\$240,748,517	25	4487	\$8,552	\$8,552	10.83%
Coahoma AHS	\$803,611	30.97%	\$1,367,326	52.69%	\$424,070	16.34%	\$2,595,008	\$0	149	221	\$11,769	\$11,769	21.72%
Coahoma County	\$5,060,169	32.41%	\$6,909,344	44.25%	\$3,645,145	23.34%	\$15,614,658	\$119,684,673	59	1432	\$10,907	\$10,907	11.84%
Coffeeville	\$1,484,602	23.37%	\$3,190,728	50.23%	\$1,676,749	26.40%	\$6,352,078	\$35,620,003	131	547	\$11,616	\$11,616	26.86%
Columbia	\$4,982,298	29.04%	\$8,777,394	51.17%	\$3,395,248	19.79%	\$17,154,940	\$73,160,645	99	1711	\$10,025	\$10,025	22.12%
Columbus	\$14,122,526	32.47%	\$20,432,797	46.97%	\$8,942,610	20.56%	\$43,497,933	\$224,315,318	29	4180	\$10,405	\$10,405	14.51%
Copiah County	\$4,265,027	21.13%	\$12,451,672	61.70%	\$3,463,698	17.16%	\$20,180,397	\$98,354,010	69	2684	\$7,518	\$7,518	40.57%
Corinth	\$5,483,176	25.68%	\$11,143,806	52.18%	\$4,728,853	22.14%	\$21,355,835	\$93,157,000	76	2274	\$9,392	\$9,392	26.51%
Covington County	\$7,185,810	28.54%	\$13,841,587	54.97%	\$4,150,801	16.49%	\$25,178,198	\$197,344,405	32	2871	\$8,769	\$8,769	26.43%
DeSoto County	\$89,522,766	35.58%	\$139,487,373	55.44%	\$22,606,735	8.98%	\$251,616,874	\$1,603,722,772	1	30818	\$8,165	\$8,165	19.86%

2013 District Data												
State % minus Local % is greater than 40% (State pulling a greater load)												
Districts that rank in the top 20 of assessed value, but the State % minus Local % is greater than 10% (Local not pulling enough of the load)												
District	Local Funds	% Local	State Funds	% State Funds	Federal Funds	% Federal Funds	Total Funds	Assessed Value	Assessed Rank	Students	Total Funds Per Student	State Minus Local
Duval	\$578,987	12.97%	\$2,657,565	59.51%	\$1,229,003	27.52%	\$4,465,555	\$9,565,198	148	543	\$8,225	46.55%
East Jasper	\$4,171,906	39.24%	\$4,426,392	41.64%	\$2,032,753	19.12%	\$10,631,051	\$80,090,300	93	906	\$11,735	2.39%
East Tallahassee	\$1,591,194	15.97%	\$6,272,404	62.94%	\$2,401,323	21.09%	\$9,964,921	\$45,767,436	124	1212	\$8,224	46.98%
Enterprise	\$3,051,456	36.54%	\$4,600,203	55.08%	\$699,495	8.38%	\$8,351,154	\$48,391,906	122	928	\$8,995	18.55%
Forest	\$4,238,075	33.82%	\$6,142,614	49.02%	\$2,150,475	17.16%	\$12,531,163	\$80,968,293	90	1411	\$8,882	15.20%
Forrest AHS	\$2,169,943	38.97%	\$2,764,994	49.66%	\$632,970	11.37%	\$5,567,907	\$0	149	548	\$10,158	10.69%
Forrest County	\$7,335,589	33.41%	\$10,974,915	49.99%	\$3,643,012	16.59%	\$21,953,516	\$133,178,697	49	2215	\$9,911	16.58%
Franklin County	\$3,154,891	23.90%	\$7,472,014	56.61%	\$2,571,145	19.48%	\$13,198,049	\$58,580,777	113	1361	\$9,697	32.71%
George County	\$6,116,226	20.37%	\$19,725,110	65.69%	\$4,188,453	13.95%	\$30,029,789	\$142,203,072	46	3895	\$7,710	45.32%
Greene County	\$4,314,342	24.92%	\$10,379,052	59.95%	\$2,618,179	15.12%	\$17,311,573	\$92,124,528	77	2005	\$8,635	35.03%
Greenville	\$10,770,737	20.58%	\$27,457,003	52.47%	\$14,104,665	26.95%	\$52,332,404	\$174,624,213	37	5367	\$9,751	31.89%
Greenwood	\$5,664,475	23.05%	\$12,329,580	50.17%	\$6,580,200	26.78%	\$24,574,254	\$112,258,354	62	2605	\$9,433	27.12%
Grenada County	\$8,527,194	25.52%	\$19,281,030	57.71%	\$5,604,085	16.77%	\$33,412,310	\$181,142,289	34	4052	\$8,247	32.19%
Gulport	\$23,591,310	41.91%	\$25,258,528	44.87%	\$7,439,679	13.22%	\$56,289,516	\$365,480,320	14	5642	\$9,978	2.96%
Hartcock County	\$13,535,563	33.10%	\$19,533,945	47.77%	\$7,824,760	19.13%	\$40,894,269	\$347,255,198	15	4167	\$9,814	14.67%
Harrison County	\$43,445,761	37.34%	\$56,949,382	48.94%	\$15,967,894	13.72%	\$116,363,037	\$820,712,241	6	13083	\$8,894	11.60%
Hattiesburg	\$18,919,781	38.90%	\$19,771,423	40.65%	\$9,945,152	20.45%	\$48,636,356	\$305,389,373	17	4263	\$11,409	1.75%
Hazelhurst	\$3,250,237	21.86%	\$6,598,283	44.37%	\$5,022,240	33.77%	\$14,870,759	\$80,899,968	91	1421	\$10,468	22.51%
Hinds AHS	\$1,102,210	46.84%	\$865,281	36.77%	\$385,613	16.39%	\$2,353,104	\$0	149	170	\$13,848	(10.07%)
Hinds County	\$27,085,471	45.54%	\$25,893,720	43.70%	\$6,397,497	10.76%	\$59,476,688	\$414,133,625	12	5919	\$10,049	(1.84%)
Hollandale	\$1,359,005	13.73%	\$3,917,080	39.58%	\$4,621,114	46.69%	\$9,897,198	\$26,573,744	137	655	\$15,116	25.85%
Holly Springs	\$3,800,618	26.86%	\$7,256,781	51.28%	\$3,094,281	21.87%	\$14,151,680	\$68,345,347	105	1391	\$10,172	24.42%
Holmes County	\$4,502,438	16.63%	\$14,393,578	53.17%	\$8,175,669	30.20%	\$27,071,685	\$95,464,961	73	2820	\$9,600	36.54%
Houston	\$3,000,729	20.04%	\$9,705,953	64.83%	\$2,264,596	15.13%	\$14,971,278	\$57,414,470	117	1703	\$8,790	44.79%
Humphreys County	\$2,654,247	17.96%	\$8,226,011	55.65%	\$3,900,964	26.39%	\$14,781,222	\$62,327,700	110	1689	\$8,751	37.69%
Indianola	\$4,563,804	20.92%	\$10,050,050	46.07%	\$7,201,621	33.01%	\$21,815,475	\$82,915,346	86	2063	\$10,574	25.15%
Itawamba County	\$7,790,307	26.75%	\$17,821,037	61.18%	\$3,516,326	12.07%	\$29,127,671	\$128,456,812	52	3348	\$8,700	34.44%
Jackson County	\$26,128,092	36.67%	\$38,356,555	53.83%	\$6,763,901	9.49%	\$71,248,548	\$484,442,494	10	8914	\$7,993	17.18%
Jackson Public Schools	\$93,440,591	33.47%	\$128,322,424	45.96%	\$57,444,616	20.57%	\$279,207,632	\$1,208,761,561	3	27266	\$10,240	12.49%
Jefferson County	\$2,308,049	19.59%	\$6,634,552	56.31%	\$2,839,004	24.10%	\$11,781,604	\$38,477,333	128	1285	\$9,166	36.72%
Jefferson Davis County	\$4,312,218	26.55%	\$8,670,453	53.37%	\$3,261,936	20.08%	\$16,244,607	\$83,698,078	85	1560	\$10,411	26.83%

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State % minus Local % is greater than 40% (State pulling a greater load)										Districts that rank in the top 20 of assessed value, but the State % minus Local % is greater than 10% (Local not pulling enough of the load)									
District	Local Funds	%	State Funds	%	Federal Funds	%	Total Funds	Assessed Value	Rank	Students	Per Student	Total Funds	Assessed Value	Rank	Students	Per Student	Total Funds	Assessed Value	Rank
Jones County	\$17,862,488	27.58%	\$38,704,797	59.75%	\$8,209,290	12.67%	\$64,776,576	\$303,438,693	18	8015	\$8,082	\$64,776,576	\$303,438,693	18	8015	\$8,082	\$64,776,576	\$303,438,693	18
Kemper County	\$2,797,943	23.96%	\$5,540,704	47.45%	\$3,337,086	28.58%	\$11,675,733	\$80,420,274	92	1099	\$10,625	\$11,675,733	\$80,420,274	92	1099	\$10,625	\$11,675,733	\$80,420,274	92
Kosciusko	\$5,013,726	27.25%	\$10,717,102	58.25%	\$2,666,205	14.49%	\$18,397,033	\$88,072,104	80	2250	\$8,175	\$18,397,033	\$88,072,104	80	2250	\$8,175	\$18,397,033	\$88,072,104	80
Lafayette County	\$9,747,510	39.28%	\$12,549,232	50.58%	\$2,515,864	10.14%	\$24,812,605	\$120,883,172	58	2411	\$10,292	\$24,812,605	\$120,883,172	58	2411	\$10,292	\$24,812,605	\$120,883,172	58
Lamar County	\$28,614,589	37.24%	\$41,535,281	54.05%	\$6,692,572	8.71%	\$76,842,442	\$454,063,103	11	8916	\$8,618	\$76,842,442	\$454,063,103	11	8916	\$8,618	\$76,842,442	\$454,063,103	11
Lauderdale County	\$13,971,749	26.65%	\$32,059,721	61.15%	\$6,394,507	12.20%	\$52,425,977	\$253,834,233	24	6456	\$8,120	\$52,425,977	\$253,834,233	24	6456	\$8,120	\$52,425,977	\$253,834,233	24
Laurel	\$13,832,491	43.57%	\$12,412,085	38.82%	\$5,629,447	17.61%	\$31,974,022	\$197,269,590	33	2846	\$11,234	\$31,974,022	\$197,269,590	33	2846	\$11,234	\$31,974,022	\$197,269,590	33
Lawrence County	\$6,138,734	31.52%	\$9,565,817	49.12%	\$3,768,570	19.35%	\$19,473,120	\$109,315,607	64	2059	\$9,459	\$19,473,120	\$109,315,607	64	2059	\$9,459	\$19,473,120	\$109,315,607	64
Leake County	\$4,661,003	19.45%	\$14,278,614	59.58%	\$5,025,870	20.97%	\$23,965,487	\$117,776,759	61	2842	\$8,434	\$23,965,487	\$117,776,759	61	2842	\$8,434	\$23,965,487	\$117,776,759	61
Lee County	\$16,931,924	29.00%	\$34,116,747	58.43%	\$7,344,796	12.58%	\$58,393,467	\$264,409,332	22	6725	\$8,683	\$58,393,467	\$264,409,332	22	6725	\$8,683	\$58,393,467	\$264,409,332	22
Leflore County	\$4,762,261	19.33%	\$12,516,725	50.82%	\$7,352,623	29.85%	\$24,631,610	\$125,244,870	55	2637	\$9,340	\$24,631,610	\$125,244,870	55	2637	\$9,340	\$24,631,610	\$125,244,870	55
Leland	\$2,208,801	25.30%	\$4,631,798	53.06%	\$1,889,551	21.64%	\$8,730,150	\$46,853,340	123	925	\$9,441	\$8,730,150	\$46,853,340	123	925	\$9,441	\$8,730,150	\$46,853,340	123
Lincoln County	\$5,105,317	23.44%	\$13,972,897	64.16%	\$2,699,244	12.39%	\$21,777,459	\$89,578,326	79	2874	\$7,577	\$21,777,459	\$89,578,326	79	2874	\$7,577	\$21,777,459	\$89,578,326	79
Long Beach	\$7,428,840	31.27%	\$13,645,194	57.44%	\$2,680,593	11.28%	\$23,754,618	\$119,156,668	60	2841	\$8,362	\$23,754,618	\$119,156,668	60	2841	\$8,362	\$23,754,618	\$119,156,668	60
Louisville	\$6,647,584	27.23%	\$13,030,932	53.37%	\$4,735,466	19.40%	\$24,413,981	\$122,214,197	57	2637	\$9,257	\$24,413,981	\$122,214,197	57	2637	\$9,257	\$24,413,981	\$122,214,197	57
Lowndes County	\$21,074,040	43.89%	\$21,098,256	43.94%	\$5,846,874	12.18%	\$48,019,171	\$294,446,976	19	4803	\$9,999	\$48,019,171	\$294,446,976	19	4803	\$9,999	\$48,019,171	\$294,446,976	19
Lumberton	\$1,590,162	24.92%	\$3,457,328	54.18%	\$1,334,241	20.91%	\$6,381,732	\$28,410,209	136	611	\$10,449	\$6,381,732	\$28,410,209	136	611	\$10,449	\$6,381,732	\$28,410,209	136
Madison County	\$64,671,235	52.60%	\$50,148,794	40.79%	\$8,136,758	6.62%	\$122,956,787	\$1,119,047,846	4	11977	\$10,266	\$122,956,787	\$1,119,047,846	4	11977	\$10,266	\$122,956,787	\$1,119,047,846	4
Marion County	\$4,602,381	21.68%	\$12,288,486	57.89%	\$4,337,381	20.43%	\$21,228,248	\$72,631,649	100	2129	\$9,973	\$21,228,248	\$72,631,649	100	2129	\$9,973	\$21,228,248	\$72,631,649	100
Marshall County	\$5,456,967	21.78%	\$14,903,314	59.48%	\$4,695,073	18.74%	\$25,055,355	\$161,450,849	39	3256	\$7,696	\$25,055,355	\$161,450,849	39	3256	\$7,696	\$25,055,355	\$161,450,849	39
McComb	\$7,905,113	29.94%	\$11,975,653	45.35%	\$6,525,890	24.71%	\$26,406,637	\$125,262,371	54	2538	\$10,406	\$26,406,637	\$125,262,371	54	2538	\$10,406	\$26,406,637	\$125,262,371	54
Meridian	\$20,881,047	35.57%	\$25,771,180	43.91%	\$12,043,689	20.52%	\$58,695,916	\$315,041,211	16	5629	\$10,427	\$58,695,916	\$315,041,211	16	5629	\$10,427	\$58,695,916	\$315,041,211	16
Monroe County	\$5,276,954	25.06%	\$11,753,335	55.82%	\$4,025,217	19.12%	\$21,055,507	\$106,732,548	65	2131	\$9,880	\$21,055,507	\$106,732,548	65	2131	\$9,880	\$21,055,507	\$106,732,548	65
Montgomery County	\$1,156,083	25.88%	\$2,255,720	50.50%	\$1,054,785	23.62%	\$4,466,588	\$31,448,553	135	281	\$15,895	\$4,466,588	\$31,448,553	135	281	\$15,895	\$4,466,588	\$31,448,553	135
Moss Point	\$8,838,617	23.79%	\$12,587,956	33.89%	\$15,720,975	42.32%	\$37,147,547	\$150,593,712	43	2211	\$16,802	\$37,147,547	\$150,593,712	43	2211	\$16,802	\$37,147,547	\$150,593,712	43
Mound Bayou	\$971,205	17.76%	\$3,145,907	57.54%	\$1,350,539	24.70%	\$5,467,650	\$11,068,102	146	531	\$10,298	\$5,467,650	\$11,068,102	146	531	\$10,298	\$5,467,650	\$11,068,102	146
Natchez-Adams	\$11,859,552	32.04%	\$16,764,650	45.30%	\$8,386,328	22.66%	\$37,010,530	\$239,610,848	26	3494	\$10,592	\$37,010,530	\$239,610,848	26	3494	\$10,592	\$37,010,530	\$239,610,848	26
Neshoba County	\$3,867,028	15.93%	\$15,651,105	64.48%	\$4,754,840	19.59%	\$24,272,973	\$99,257,304	68	3047	\$7,966	\$24,272,973	\$99,257,304	68	3047	\$7,966	\$24,272,973	\$99,257,304	68
Nettleton	\$1,972,934	18.56%	\$6,970,756	65.56%	\$1,688,740	15.88%	\$10,632,430	\$33,469,908	132	1289	\$8,246	\$10,632,430	\$33,469,908	132	1289	\$8,246	\$10,632,430	\$33,469,908	132
New Albany	\$6,030,492	30.80%	\$11,055,180	56.45%	\$2,496,937	12.75%	\$19,582,609	\$81,191,687	88	2083	\$9,400	\$19,582,609	\$81,191,687	88	2083	\$9,400	\$19,582,609	\$81,191,687	88
Newton County	\$3,605,592	24.39%	\$9,178,943	62.08%	\$2,000,851	13.53%	\$14,785,387	\$55,567,783	119	1752	\$8,439	\$14,785,387	\$55,567,783	119	1752	\$8,439	\$14,785,387	\$55,567,783	119

2013 District Data												
District	Local Funds		State Funds		Federal Funds		Total Funds		Assessed		Total Funds	
	Local	%	State Funds	%	Federal Funds	%	Total Funds	Assessed Value	Rank	Students	Per Student	State Minus Local
Newton Municipal	\$2,231,245	24.03%	\$5,119,152	55.14%	\$1,933,793	20.83%	\$9,284,189	\$41,621,097	126	950	\$9,775	31.11%
North Bolivar	\$1,024,528	15.16%	\$3,628,787	53.69%	\$2,105,128	31.15%	\$6,758,443	\$19,102,093	144	615	\$10,982	38.53%
North Panola	\$3,904,235	23.81%	\$8,476,482	51.68%	\$4,020,057	24.51%	\$16,400,774	\$64,735,430	107	1485	\$11,046	27.88%
North Pike	\$3,221,872	19.49%	\$11,166,351	67.54%	\$2,145,781	12.98%	\$16,534,004	\$68,169,361	106	2289	\$7,224	48.05%
North Tiptah	\$2,091,060	19.93%	\$7,039,645	67.08%	\$1,363,258	12.99%	\$10,493,963	\$40,031,194	127	1275	\$8,233	47.16%
Noxubee County	\$3,909,870	22.65%	\$9,083,316	52.62%	\$4,269,087	24.73%	\$17,262,273	\$64,314,345	108	1687	\$10,233	29.97%
Ocean Springs	\$17,334,621	39.32%	\$23,070,871	52.33%	\$3,680,020	8.35%	\$44,085,512	\$256,949,702	23	5334	\$8,265	13.01%
Okolona	\$1,365,425	17.54%	\$3,777,648	48.53%	\$2,641,672	33.93%	\$7,784,745	\$24,544,883	139	644	\$12,091	30.99%
Oktoberbeha County	\$2,858,911	35.72%	\$4,474,239	41.42%	\$2,469,413	22.86%	\$10,802,563	\$71,043,821	102	805	\$13,413	5.70%
Oxford	\$21,695,435	52.53%	\$15,983,198	38.70%	\$3,620,244	8.77%	\$41,298,877	\$375,093,694	13	3674	\$11,240	(13.83%)
Pascagoula	\$44,850,772	49.38%	\$30,575,638	33.67%	\$15,395,955	16.95%	\$90,822,365	\$957,137,405	5	6453	\$14,075	(15.72%)
Pass Christian	\$10,647,517	52.77%	\$7,437,246	36.86%	\$2,090,590	10.36%	\$20,175,353	\$174,513,158	38	1803	\$11,188	(15.91%)
Pearl	\$13,082,475	39.85%	\$15,814,637	48.17%	\$3,936,084	11.99%	\$32,833,196	\$205,362,830	31	3762	\$8,727	8.32%
Pearl River County	\$6,876,570	28.53%	\$14,396,131	59.72%	\$2,834,175	11.76%	\$24,106,876	\$105,322,544	66	2850	\$8,460	31.19%
Perry County	\$3,365,048	29.48%	\$5,843,602	51.19%	\$2,207,668	19.34%	\$11,416,318	\$74,093,834	97	1148	\$9,945	21.71%
Petal	\$11,243,219	33.79%	\$18,306,425	55.01%	\$3,727,651	11.20%	\$33,277,295	\$158,136,886	41	3790	\$8,781	21.23%
Philadelphia	\$3,355,707	32.23%	\$5,195,869	49.91%	\$1,859,718	17.86%	\$10,411,295	\$55,594,283	118	1109	\$9,389	17.67%
Picayune	\$9,827,427	30.21%	\$16,196,499	49.79%	\$6,504,047	20.00%	\$32,527,974	\$152,439,361	42	3223	\$10,094	19.58%
Pontotoc City	\$4,404,377	24.29%	\$11,411,577	62.94%	\$2,313,764	12.76%	\$18,129,718	\$72,478,519	101	2211	\$8,199	38.65%
Pontotoc County	\$5,467,654	20.88%	\$17,640,873	67.38%	\$3,072,790	11.74%	\$26,181,318	\$97,583,811	70	3279	\$7,984	46.50%
Poplarville	\$5,321,208	30.69%	\$9,695,722	55.92%	\$2,322,579	13.39%	\$17,339,510	\$86,997,810	81	1824	\$9,508	25.23%
Prentiss County	\$4,575,184	22.47%	\$12,802,107	62.87%	\$2,985,156	14.66%	\$20,362,447	\$70,303,238	104	2277	\$8,944	40.40%
Quitman County	\$2,207,076	19.47%	\$6,424,420	56.68%	\$2,703,660	23.85%	\$11,335,157	\$32,275,729	134	1145	\$9,901	37.21%
Quitman Municipal	\$5,139,038	30.72%	\$8,534,323	51.02%	\$3,052,576	18.25%	\$16,725,936	\$133,217,784	48	1880	\$8,896	20.30%
Rankin County	\$66,152,928	40.98%	\$80,601,389	49.93%	\$14,675,540	9.09%	\$161,429,857	\$1,251,576,798	2	18369	\$8,788	8.95%
Richmon	\$1,185,959	21.37%	\$3,456,355	62.29%	\$906,399	16.34%	\$5,548,693	\$21,831,983	142	676	\$8,208	40.92%
Scott County	\$3,933,448	14.52%	\$18,566,210	68.53%	\$4,591,531	16.95%	\$27,091,190	\$96,017,993	72	3770	\$7,186	54.01%
Senatobia	\$4,472,437	28.70%	\$9,242,436	59.31%	\$1,868,771	11.99%	\$15,583,644	\$79,109,747	94	1732	\$8,998	30.61%
Shaw	\$1,288,715	23.45%	\$2,604,208	47.38%	\$1,603,782	29.18%	\$5,496,705	\$22,041,274	141	469	\$11,732	23.93%
Simpson County	\$8,913,262	25.78%	\$19,224,759	55.61%	\$6,432,290	18.61%	\$34,570,311	\$229,915,403	27	3962	\$8,725	29.83%
Smith County	\$5,243,337	23.48%	\$13,724,436	61.46%	\$3,361,664	15.05%	\$22,329,436	\$132,705,359	50	2704	\$8,259	37.98%

2013 District Data											
	State % minus Local % is greater than 40% (State pulling a greater load)										
	Districts that rank in the top 20 of assessed value, but the State % minus Local % is greater than 10% (Local not pulling enough of the load)										

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**From:** Milton Stennett  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 08, 2016 7:47 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** Funding suggestion

Whatever formula is ultimately devised and adopted, it should be fully funded each year or it too will be ineffective and unreliable in producing higher student achievement. I was a school district CFO when MAEP was created. Our district never made any capital improvements based on using projected increases in MAEP funds because we never expected them to materialize. We had no faith that the legislature was committed to fully fund the formula. Frankly, we predicted around 1997 that the the formula would never get full funding twice before we all retired. I was the last to retire (in 2008) and we were right. The lack of legislative will was a bigger flaw than all of the flaws in the formula. Whatever is developed, school districts must know what to project is coming and must be able to rely on it. They cannot make budgets or progress on empty promises.  
Sent from my iPhone



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**From:** Charlie Heath  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 10, 2016 3:46 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** funding formula

I sense that political leaders in Jackson are looking for a way to shift funding from public schools to private schools. I consider this to be huge mistake. Indeed, the future of our state's economic development depends upon providing a quality education for ALL Mississippians. Prospective employers demand an educated workforce. Let's do that!

Please either fund the current formula, or come up with a new one that provides funding to all school districts. Let's make school funding a priority, and let shortfalls be absorbed elsewhere. I know every department complains of underfunding, but none can demonstrate a need as great as those of public schools. Let insulate that formula from political tinkering. I know that is hard for legislators to do, but this is so important that we must. Instead of being last, why not be so innovative, so bold as to be a leader in providing a first class education to all.

Please let me know how I can help!

Charlie Heath  
Heath Company, Inc.



This email has been checked for viruses by Avast antivirus software.  
[www.avast.com](http://www.avast.com)

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**From:** Elizabeth Bailey  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 10, 2016 2:50 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** MAEP

I am very concerned about the MAEP formula as a mother, grandmother, retired teacher, school board member, and citizen of the state of Mississippi. I believe that the best way, only way, for our state to be competitive globally is for our children to be competitive globally. I mean ALL of OUR CHILDREN, not just those that were lucky enough to be born into privilege. Every child deserves the opportunity to grow and thrive. Clearly the money received from the state through the Mississippi Adequate Education Program is critical in moving toward this goal. I join others in making the recommendations below.

**These components are absolutely necessary to include in Mississippi's school funding law:**

1. An objective, **formula-driven** base student cost that:

- keeps pace with inflation and considers increasing demands on districts
- ensures that school funding is based on what schools need
- avoids subjecting school funding to political whims

2. A means for providing **equitable resources** for all children that:

- ensures that children in low wealth communities have funding that is on par with the funding in higher wealth communities
- avoids shifting more of the school funding burden to the local level in high wealth communities

Thank you for your careful consideration of what is best for our children and our state.

Elizabeth Bailey

West Point, MS

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**From:** brian jernigan  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 10, 2016 4:06 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** MAEP Formula Revision

As an educator, I hear all the comments about how the formula is broken. The part that is broken is that it has been rarely funded by the legislature.

Whatever decision is made, those changes must take into account the following:

1. Demand upon districts
2. The number of student within the district
3. The local funding support/capabilities of the community...including the industry or lack thereof.
4. Voids any political bias or interference
5. Takes into account that if a school is in a low socioeconomic area, has full classrooms and 8 students move in..... that does not give enough funding to hire a new teacher.

As a parent of three children and an educator, I do not see equitable funding, or even enough funding to offer our students the same opportunities as districts that are in areas that have prosperous tax bases.

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**From:** Tim Carter  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 10, 2016 4:43 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** MAEP revamp

Very concerned:

- 1) New Jersey firm to do work
- 2) prevalence of Charter School bias
- 3) cloak of secrecy in obtaining company
- 4) CEO previously spoke of " Bankruptcy good opportunity for education revolution- video documented
- 5) failure to allow the MAEP to ever work by either political party

Tim Carter  
Oxford,MS

Sent from my iPhone

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**From:** burdymom  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 10, 2016 4:58 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** MAEP

Don't you believe in you heart that all of Mississippi's school children deserve the best opportunity to have adequate education ? Please do not give excuses for under funding.

Sent from my Verizon 4G LTE smartphone

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**From:** Jane Pickett  
**Sent:** Friday, November 11, 2016 8:18 AM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** Input on School Finance

I hope that the members of this committee want to be remembered as education leaders like William Winter and not raiders of the children's fund. Do the right thing!

These components are absolutely necessary to include in Mississippi's school funding law:

1. An objective, formula-driven base student cost that:

- keeps pace with inflation and considers increasing demands on districts
- ensures that school funding is based on what schools need
- avoids subjecting school funding to political whims

2. A means for providing equitable resources for all children that:

- ensures that children in low wealth communities have funding that is on par with the funding in higher wealth communities
- avoids shifting more of the school funding burden to the local level in high wealth communities

--  
Jane Moore Pickett

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**From:** Pete Halverson  
**Sent:** Friday, November 11, 2016 10:40 AM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** fund school maintenance and ADA requirements

Good morning, the issue with the public schools in Mississippi that I would like to address has nothing to do with MAEP, classroom, or education funding. I would like the school buildings in Mississippi be repaired and brought up to code. I would also like all of the schools to be accessible for people with disabilities, one-time injuries, and the elderly. I am disabled and use a rolling walker for mobility. Climbing stairs is very difficult and dangerous for me. My daughter attends Bailey Middle School in Jackson. There are numerous meetings at the school that I have had to forego because they require ascending or descending a staircase. There are no elevators available.

I believe this problem is important because family involvement is crucial with our students. Improving accessibility for parents, grandparents, friends, and students benefits everyone. As a state we deserve this. Better schools begin with better buildings. Inclusion for all must be a part of any plan to improve education.

If this is the wrong forum for this message please let me know.

Thank you,

Pete Halverson  
Jackson, MS

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**From:** Bob Fuller  
**Sent:** Friday, November 11, 2016 1:46 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** Public Input on School Funding

This topic is personal. I have twin daughters in 1st grade and a third grade daughter as well; all enrolled in the public schools in Louisville.

Until you fully fund MAEP, public education can not be fairly judged. In spite of the politicians depriving the schools of "adequate" funding (heaven forbid more than adequate!) the graduation rate is now approaching the national average and the students are being educated at higher levels than ever. That is QUANTITY and QUALITY!

Invest in our people! You will see a huge return from this investment. Please "adequately" fund the public schools, for the sake of my daughters, their classmates, and all students throughout the state!



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**From:** Virgil Belue  
**Sent:** Friday, November 11, 2016 4:27 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance; Nancy Loomer  
**Subject:** Teacher Personnel Report

MAEP Study Committee

Following in my suggestion of a matter that should be a part of the new finance system for our public schools. I served almost 39 years in public education, the last 22 years were served as the first superintendent of the Clinton Public School District.

Under the old Minimum Program for funding schools was a provision for providing X number of teachers based on the district's average pupil daily attendance. School districts listed the teachers with the highest certification and the most tenure first on the list and the teachers with the least certification and the least tenure last on the report that was required to be submitted to the Mississippi State Department of Education. The districts were required to pay these teachers pursuant to the states' salary schedule. Districts could hire as many teachers as they wanted to; however, these "extra" teachers had to be paid from local funds or other sources. This program encouraged districts to hire the "best qualified" teachers with the highest certification and the most tenure for their schools. This method encouraged districts to encouraged their teachers to obtain higher certification. Under MAEP districts can take the state funds and hire teachers with the least certification and tenure and use the funds for other purposes. It also discourages teacher who may move to another area from obtaining higher certification because the new school district may not employ them when other less certified and tenured teacher are available. If you do not believe that such practices are being employed, do a study of this matter, and you will find this practice is employed very often.

WANT TO PUT MORE FUNDS IN THE CLASSROOM, THIS WILL DO IT.

Virgil F. Belue, Ed.D.  
Retired Superintendent of Clinton Public School District.

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**From:** L.K. Helton  
**Sent:** Friday, November 11, 2016 7:40 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** Mississippi's system of school funding

The way our schools are financed now is totally irresponsible. The school board can require an increase in property taxes any time it comes up short and the state cannot fully fund. The taxpayers have no opportunity to vote on these increases, they are forced on up. This system puts no accountability on the school boards, thus they act like a teenager with Daddy's debit card! They know that if they don't have the money, oh well! Tee-Hee, the taxpayers will just have to do without something else to pay their increased taxes or lose their homes! Too bad, suckers! The only year in recent memory when the taxes in Jones County have not been increased at the requirement of the school system, it was announced that since they had a little surplus that year, they created a new position as the county central office! That was a total slap in the face to the taxpayers. Instead of carrying that money over for the next year's budget to maybe prevent a tax increase, they instead created a position for someone's girlfriend, and the next year gave her a \$5,000 raise, to boot!

I believe it is evident after this week's election that the people of this country are fed up with the government's overreach. That is certainly true in the case of funding our schools. They could dispose of some of those overpaid positions at the central office of the school system and help balance their own budget!

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 13, 2016 11:59 AM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** School Funding Input

Dear Respected Government Officials,

It has come to my attention that input has been requested pertaining to the revamping of Mississippi's school funding. I have been in the education field for over 31 years, and have served at both the administrative and classroom level. I have experience in both Catholic, private, boarding school and public education. So, I've had the opportunity to see education from a variety of perspectives. I have served in Jackson Public Schools for over 11 years. *(10 years as a librarian at Watkins Elementary and I just completed my first year as a gifted teacher at Power APAC).*

I worked at Watkins Elementary from 2004-2014. *During a portion of that time, MAEP had been fully funded.*

Here is what I observed -

- 1) class size was reduced
- 2) additional personnel were attained to assist in tutoring the children and provide additional support.
- 3) during the 2008-2009 school year, MDE indicated that Watkins Elementary's accountability rating went from "C" Successful to "B" High Performing.

**This reinforces what educational research has been telling us all for years.** Reducing the class size and providing additional support should result in improved overall academic performance.

The reality of our situation in Mississippi is that many low income parents do not have the skill set to help their children with academics. Therefore, in order to compensate for this, we must reduce class size and hire additional personnel and services to help those children. So, if Mississippi is truly serious about improving our public education system we must do what is right.

Therefore, an objective formula for base student cost is essential. It should keep up with inflation, take into account what schools need and provide a means for providing equitable resources.

Think about what a great victory it will be for Mississippi if we are able to improve and sustain those improvements in our public school system! My experience at Watkins already has proven that improvements *can happen through fully funding the MAEP.*

If we work together to improve Jackson Public Schools *(and others like it)* we not only improve the district(s) but *ourselves and our state.*

Respectfully submitted,

David Schommer, Teacher of the Gifted  
Power Academic and Performing Arts Complex  
Jackson Public Schools

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**From:** Denise Pilgrim  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 13, 2016 8:52 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** School Finance

Please fund every public school with at least as much money as MAEP dictated. Why even consider building new 'charter' schools if we are not able to fully fund schools that already exist? We can't afford two school systems and all our students need a quality education even if their parents don't care to choose a charter school. Pay the teachers not the admin.

Denise Pilgrim  
Madison, MS

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**From:** Jerrell Dearman  
**Sent:** Monday, November 14, 2016 7:13 AM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** School funding

Mr. Gunn and Mr. Reeves, I think you should place all administrative salaries to come from local funds. Then the local board will be more accountable to the people. Then you won't see a superintendent getting a \$30,000 raise. Too much money going to administration. Superintendents putting buddies in administrative positions and creating positions. Local boards can cap the money spent on administrative salaries and will if it is all coming from local taxes.

Jerrell Dearman

Sent from my iPhone

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**From:** Fay Welch  
**Sent:** Monday, November 14, 2016 11:02 AM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** School Financing

Dear Sir or Madam,

As having been the school nurse at our school for 13 years, when there are budget cuts to the schools, the school nurses always worry about job security. The role of the school nurse is not to just put on band-aids. Our job is to keep the students at school or prevent sicknesses from being spread when there is a legitimate reason to be sent home. We are a lending ear, the mom away from home, the social worker when the school doesn't have one and the counselor when the counselor is out. We also, have many other roles that are too long to list. As the saying goes..."It takes a village to raise a child." From 7:30 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. the children at school are in our hands. We work together to make them reach the goals of a great education!

When I look at the public school system from the perspective of a teacher, I see that the classrooms need new desks. Comfortable desk are important for students to learn. If a desk is broken or even too small for a student to sit it, it can be a distraction from the learning process. The right number of text books and teaching materials is also very important.

The young people of today are our future. We need to give them the best chance of a proper education to be successful adults.

Thank you so much for considering funding the educational system.

Sincerely yours,  
Fay B. Gant, RN  
School Nurse  
Winona Secondary School

## Laura Hipp

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**From:** Julia Weaver  
**Sent:** Monday, November 14, 2016 11:34 AM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** MAEP re-vamp

To the EdBuild Team:

I am the parent of students in the Ocean Springs School District.

I have been very concerned that the Legislature has not fully funded MAEP in recent years. Even though our school district is an 'A', chronic underfunding has been a real problem for our students. Our class sizes continue to grow which inevitably leads to problems with academic achievement. One of our high school math classes has 33 students and 11 inclusion students! In addition, our high school counselors have approximately 425 students each. They end up spending most of their time with scheduling issues so they are not able to help students with problems that keep them from being able to focus in the classroom. Perhaps even more importantly, they aren't able to help students who want to go to college but need extra help to apply and make a plan to attend.

As you study Mississippi schools and our financing system, I ask you to consider the following:

- Make this process transparent and include opportunities for parents and educators to participate. Hold public meetings. Send out surveys. An open-ended email opportunity is not going to be the best vehicle for everyone. Most people won't even know where to start.
- Be prepared to 'show your work' so that the public knows how you arrived at your recommendations.
- Make a commitment that the base student cost will be the same or greater than the base student cost in the current formula. We cannot afford to go backwards.
- Include a plan to keep pace with inflation, to gradually rise to the Southeast average.
- Consider special circumstances such as the needs of high growth districts and districts along the coast. School districts on the Gulf Coast have insurance and utility increases that are beyond our control that really stress our budgets. Become familiar with the predicted rise in electricity costs in the MS Power Company service area due to the Kemper County Power Plant.
- Ensure that students in low-wealth districts have funding similar to higher wealth districts.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment,

Julia

Julia Weaver  
Ocean Springs, MS

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**From:** Rebecca Hilliard  
**Sent:** Monday, November 14, 2016 2:39 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** corporate tax cuts

Cutting corporate taxes in Mississippi and cutting public school funding in the same year are unacceptable to me. My 8th grader attends Oxford Middle School so she is one of the lucky ones. I am a Youth Court Prosecutor in two small Mississippi counties and I can assure you that some of these kids don't have the advantages that the children in the Oxford School District have. For some of them, school is all they've got.

Quit messing around with education in Mississippi.

Sincerely,

--

Rebecca Hilliard Hutchins

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**From:** Holly Dean  
**Sent:** Monday, November 14, 2016 3:27 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** EdBuild Public Comments

Hello and thank you for the opportunity to provide my comments on the MAEP revision. I am a parent of 3 boys in MS public schools and with that am a strong public school supporter. First and foremost, I believe this process must be completely transparent. There must be a formula for the new base student cost built into law. I applaud efforts to make funding within MS fair, but MS funding as a whole, must be fair in comparison to other states. We have high expectations for our schools, which is good, but we cannot expect stellar public schools on a shoestring budget!

Holly Dean  
Madison, MS

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**From:** Louis Bridges  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 15, 2016 7:50 AM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Cc:** Nancy Loomer  
**Subject:** MAEP revamp

If MDE would change the policy on class size to 12 with max of 15, this would put it at the ratio of most private and charter schools. Then the teachers would be able to achieve better with their students. The schools in MS have not kept up with technology in all districts and that should also be considered when looking at school funding.

Teachers are parents also, their wages should be compatible to states surrounding MS. This would keep some of our better teachers from leaving.

It would be a nice thing for all legislators to visit schools in the rural areas to see how teachers are having to spend their own money sometimes to try and ensure their classrooms and students have basic supplies.

MS should go to some standardization of classrooms, block schedule or class schedule. This way all schools are evaluated the same.

All K - 5 classes should have teacher assistants in the classroom, these are the crucial years of ensuring are children are grasping the basics and it is incumbent upon all in legislature to ensure the children are given a fair chance at success.

v/r  
Louis Bridges

Sent from my iPhone

On Nov 10, 2016, at 2:55 PM, Nancy Loomer <[nloome@msparentscampaign.org](mailto:nloome@msparentscampaign.org)> wrote:



Dear Louis,

The school funding revamp remains a pressing concern for public school supporters. Here's the latest...

Public hearings about possible changes to the Mississippi Adequate Education Program (MAEP) have not yet been scheduled, however, Lt. Gov. Reeves and Speaker Gunn have set up an **email address for the public to use to provide input**. You can send your thoughts and suggestions to: [schoolfinance@ls.ms.gov](mailto:schoolfinance@ls.ms.gov). **Please weigh in** on the factors you believe are critical to consider in any changes that are made to the way our children's education is funded.

Funding for our public schools should be sufficient to allow Mississippi students to compete well with the children of every other state and country.

**These components are absolutely necessary to include in Mississippi's school funding law:**

1. An objective, **formula-driven** base student cost that:

- keeps pace with inflation and considers increasing demands on districts
- ensures that school funding is based on what schools need

- avoids subjecting school funding to political whims

2. A means for providing **equitable resources** for all children that:

- ensures that children in low wealth communities have funding that is on par with the funding in higher wealth communities
- avoids shifting more of the school funding burden to the local level in high wealth communities

In October, EdBuild, the firm the leadership hired to recommend changes to the MAEP, met with state lawmakers. The firm's representative promoted a "fair" student funding system that uses a base student cost plus multipliers to ensure that individual student needs are met. A good bit of time was spent explaining how the multipliers would provide additional funding for students with various needs. Almost no time was spent discussing how the base cost would be determined. Because the base cost will be the driver of all student funding, **details about how this component will be determined from year to year are of critical importance.** [See vital information about this issue here.](#)

Please continue to encourage your legislators to insist on a formula that moves Mississippi forward, not backward. Our children deserve nothing less!

Gratefully,

Nancy

*If you value the efforts of The Parents' Campaign and would like for our work to continue, click [here](#) to support us with a donation.*



222 North President Street, Suite 102  
 Jackson, Mississippi 39201  
 Phone 601.961.4551  
[www.msparentscampaign.org](http://www.msparentscampaign.org)

*If you no longer wish to receive emails from The Parents' Campaign, simply reply to this email with UNSUBSCRIBE as your subject line.*

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**From:** Becky Guidry  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 15, 2016 7:58 AM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** Public Hearing

To all concerned,

I am sending my feedback today as both a parent of a public school child as well as an active member of my community. First and foremost, it would be beneficial for everyone if public meetings were held throughout the state. The news I am reading from yesterday afternoon indicates this will not be the case. I am asking you to reconsider so that people who do not have the opportunity to travel to Jackson for a 1hr meeting have their voices heard, similar to MDE's recent listening tour statewide to provide and receive input on ESSA.

Secondly, recommendations to changes in the formula that decrease funding shouldn't even be considered. MAEP hasn't been fully funded in years and this is hurting our schools. Regardless of the recommendations, I would like for EdBuild to show how their formula is derived. Additionally, the formula should not place a higher burden on the districts' local tax base. Doing so would widen the divide between lower- and higher-wealth districts.

Finally, please take the time to talk to the Educators and School Principals throughout the state. They are the ones on the front-lines, so to speak, that make choices every day based on the budget and the needs of their students.

Thank you for taking my feedback. I hope to be able to provide more in person at a public meeting on the Gulf Coast.

Regards,  
Rebecca Guidry  
Gulfport School District

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**From:** Barry Pittman  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 15, 2016 11:20 AM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** Public school funding

FUND PUBLIC SCHOOLS! Seriously, let's consolidate some districts, and take that savings and put it into the schools. Let's get rid of our current state superintendent, she appears to only care for her cronies. Let's FUND the Mississippi School for Mathematics and Science!!! Have you not read the study?? There's a 10% rate of return on money spent on the students there for the state. How can you NOT want that?? They have had to cut student enrollment because they have been on a level budget for the last 5 years. FIX IT NOW. We parents are getting PISSED about it!

Barry Pittman

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**From:** Nancy Lockhart  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 15, 2016 12:48 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** EdBuild

Forget/fired EdBuild and fund MAEP. MAEP and our public school teacher will get the job done for ALL MS public school children.

Nancy Lockhart

Madison, MS

Madison County School District and grandson in Pass Christian School District

Sent from my iPhone

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**From:** philip eide  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 15, 2016 2:19 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** School funding

I agree with Hob. Let's follow the current law and fully fund MAEP before declaring it bad policy.

---

**From:** Melissa Baltz  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 15, 2016 3:24 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** School financing

Education should be of the highest priority for Mississippi. Until and unless we fully fund education for our children, the state will continue to lag between other states in income, job opportunities, health and crime. It is my sincere hope that bringing in a consultant means that the legislature and Governor are taking seriously the importance of education.

I would like to see an objective formula with inflation protections built right into it. Such a formula should have a base student cost that will not be subject to political pressure or whims to change. Additionally, there should be additional funding for those districts working with students in poverty that do not have the ability to fully fund their schools, as well as additional funds for special education, gifted programs and other special programs.

I would hope that more local funding would not be required under a new formula. It is the responsibility of the entire state to educate all of our children.

Thank you for your consideration of my thoughts.

Sincerely,

M. Melissa Baltz

Brandon MS



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**From:** Damon Ladner  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 15, 2016 4:25 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** School Finance

I understand that the legislative leadership is going after k-12 public education in Mississippi for personal gain at public loss. I also understand this letter will make no difference in the final outcome of school funding, however here is my voice.

I do believe there are ways to trim costs in public education. I do not believe cost trimming should be achieved through force or legislation that does not promote student achievement. I also do not believe that a continually shrinking budget will achieve this outcome either. A systematic and measured approach from the legislature and Department of Education will yield the greatest benefit for Mississippi. I do have ideas on this as well if so desired.

Why are we not looking to higher education for cost cutting measures? We currently have 15 community or junior colleges in Mississippi. This number and disbursement was appropriate at one time, but not today. We are a much more mobile society and travel isn't as big a burden. The other factor is that most senior colleges in the state now have branches in multiple towns. We are starting to see an overlap of higher level educational opportunities. This factor tied in with no regulation of what counts from high schools to certain community colleges for credit has made for a convoluted system.

Furthermore, we have 8 public institutions of higher learning and 10 private institutions of higher learning. Mississippi has a total of 18 higher learning institutions in a state of 2.9 million people, or about one college for every 161,000 people. If you add in community/junior colleges, you have a total 33 institutions or about one for every 87,000 persons. The numbers are even more drastic when you see that only 32% of Mississippians (928,000) have a college degree.

A reduction of 2 and 4 years institutions is often seen as political suicide and a reason they are largely untouched, but in hard times all options deserve a look. Imagine the savings without loss of service possible in a reduction from 8 to 4 public higher education institutions and from 15 to 7 two-year institutions.

My last concern is the current budget process. All departments were cut but legislative. Shouldn't our leaders be the first to cut costs and staff? Instead, we get more secret contracts and more handouts for businesses. The recently awarded tire plant in Clinton cost Mississippians \$88,000 per job. I honestly do not believe we will recoup our investment for a minimum of 20 years. We could have hired 3 times the number of people for state jobs paying \$29,000. I hope in the future we be more measured in our efforts to attract businesses.

Respectfully submitted,

M. Damon Ladner, PhD

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**From:** Lott, Johnny  
**Sent:** Monday, November 14, 2016 7:24 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Cc:** Lott, Johnny  
**Subject:** MAEP funding plans

I am a retired teacher of all grades from 3-university. I live in Oxford but am in the Lafayette County School District. We have school taxes from both districts. Though both districts do reasonably well in testing, we all know that MS does not in comparison with any schools anywhere. A cut in funding guarantees that there will never be improvement. Money may not be the complete answer but without it, MS students have no hope because there will continue to be less qualified teachers in the revolving door, low expectations of students, especially in low tax districts, and more.

There simply must be open meetings in all areas of the state to explain what is being planned, what could happen from people's points of view, and exactly how you are using data to make decisions.

In order to keep public schools viable which is a given, the base cannot be lowered and plans for keeping up with inflation must be figured in for the future.

Finally as mentioned before, the plan must guarantee equity for all districts. There can be no exceptions!

Do not destroy MS students' education.

Johnny W. Lott

Oxford, MS

Sent from my iPhone

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**From:** Richard M  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 16, 2016 8:45 AM  
**To:** Representatives; Schoolfinance; Senators  
**Subject:** MAEP

I am appalled and disgusted that state contracts using taxpayer dollars are being withheld from the public. This is not how democracy works, and the self-important cabal of officials who decided they have the right to rule from the shadows are doing a disservice to the people of Mississippi by acting in secret. This is beyond disgusting!

Underfunding our schools puts our kids and state at a competitive disadvantage in the global economy. We need more public hearings on the MAEP revamp to be held around the state so parents can participate and have their voices heard. This issue is too important to be conducted in the dark.

Richard McNeer

Oxford, MS

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**From:** Otis Moorehouse  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 16, 2016 8:58 AM  
**To:** Representatives; Schoolfinance; Senators  
**Subject:** contracts and funding

Why are you hiding state contracts from the taxpayers?

You people can't even get your collective act together enough to pass a simple law protecting dogs and cats from abuse and you expect the people to simply trust you with education funding?

Are you serious?

We are watching you and we are not happy.

Otis Moorehouse

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**From:** CLAUDE JONES  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 16, 2016 9:40 AM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** comment

Your failing to fully fund MAEP is nothing short of criminal. You are choosing to further your ambitions rather than give the best for our children. I hope we can vote everyone of you out of office.

CLAUDE JONES, PONTOTOC MS

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**From:** Erika Roberts  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 16, 2016 1:13 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** Public Hearing

With no exceptions contracts should be made available to the public. Transparency is key to having an efficient government. I urge you not to set forth policies that keep things hidden from taxpayers. That is unethical.

Erika Roberts

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**From:** Terri Miciello  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 16, 2016 12:27 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** MS Education Funding

I am a concerned parent of public school children who has been dealing with the effects of underfunded schools for several years now. My children attend Columbia Public Schools and our schools have been affected by ever-increasing class sizes, delayed building repairs, loss of vital curriculum and programs and the elimination of teacher's assistants in all first grade classrooms. I am hopeful that by initiating this process that our Mississippi leaders truly wish to improve education for every public school child in our state.

I would like to ask that a public meeting be held in my area so that I and other parents could attend and express our concerns. Two specific considerations I would ask for is that base student cost be at least what it is currently and that there is some method to keep pace with inflation, and that the formula is designed to ensure that low wealth districts have funding similar to higher wealth districts.

Please consider every public school child in Mississippi as you proceed with this process. They are our future. There are many concerned parents watching, listening and voting.

Thank you,

Mary Miciello  
Columbia, MS



MISSISSIPPI ASSOCIATION OF  
SCHOOL BUSINESS OFFICIALS

Sheryle Coaker, Executive Director

Petal, MS

Email

Phone

November 15, 2016

Dear State Leaders:

We, the Board of Directors of the Mississippi Association of School Business Officials, would like to offer our expertise and input in your discussions regarding the current and future education funding formulas. Our Association's Board consists of School District Financial Officers from eleven school districts across the state. Our representation covers all aspects of Mississippi's public schools, from student-community diversity to varying financial circumstances to each graded performance level.

Since we serve as our own Districts' expert on MAEP and oversee all financial aspects of public education, we feel that we could be an excellent resource on how the current funding formula actually works and impacts schools. We could also provide accurate answers to many questions you may have related to potential changes in the formula.

Our ultimate goal is to simply assist the legislature in evaluating the impact changes in the MAEP formula will have on public education.

We truly understand the struggle to balance budgets and simply desire a funding formula that provides the children of Mississippi the greatest possibility to succeed. Please feel free to contact our President, Mr. David Rubenstein, of South Panola School District, at

or

Sincerely,

David Rubenstein, South Panola School District  
Kenny Hughes, Lowndes County School District  
Sharolyn Miller, Jackson Public School District  
Jennifer Hession, Lamar County School District  
Brenda Myers, Pearl School District  
Sandy Halliwell, Clinton School District  
Earl Burke, Hinds County School District  
Shane Switzer, Biloxi School District  
Jana Grenn, Pascagoula-Gautier School District  
Yulanda Austin, Tunica County School District  
Dana Fleming, Gulfport School District  
Sheryle Coaker, Executive Director



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**From:** Davis, Hollie  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 16, 2016 2:06 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** MAEP Fnding

I will not be able to attend the meeting to discuss the revamping of the MAEP formula, but I wanted the committee to consider extra funding for students who have been diagnosed with dyslexia. Since Mississippi passed HB1031, all students are to be screened in kindergarten and first grade. Up to 15 to 20% of the population are dyslexic. Dyslexia screeners, diagnostic testing for dyslexia, and dyslexia therapists require extra money for a district. Many districts do not follow the dyslexia law because of the lack of funding. If MAEP specifies that the money is only to be used for these services to our dyslexic students, we would see tremendous growth in reading.

Sincerely,  
Hollie Davis

--  
Hollie Davis, M.Ed.  
Dyslexia Interventionist  
Rankin County School District

**Rankin County School District**

**Mission:** Bring Everyone's Strengths Together! We will all intentionally focus on empowering our students to reach their maximum potential by embracing opportunities and challenges while cultivating a tradition of distinction in education.

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**From:** Adrian Shipman  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 16, 2016 2:08 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Cc:** Jay Hughes; Steve Massengill; Gray Tollison  
**Subject:** Public Hearing

I am extremely concerned about the potential changes in the Mississippi school funding law. The idea of changing a law that has only been followed twice since its passage in 1997 is alarming. Teachers, librarians, counselors, instructional materials, and the basic operational cost of the school building are all factors to be considered when referring to the money going to the classroom. It is vital that any funding changes include an objective FORMULA that allows for inflation and school needs. There must be a detailed method to provide equitable resources for all children that does not burden wealthy districts, while providing level funding in low wealth districts. The base student cost must be determined by a set formula. The process must be transparent. The determination of the base student cost cannot be left to the legislature. The legislature must be accountable for funding public schools.

I am hopeful that any changes will bring increased funding for existing Mississippi public schools. I also expect complete transparency and an eagerness by lawmakers to include parents and educators in the process.

Best,  
Adrian Shipman

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**From:** Dawn Smith  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 16, 2016 4:43 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance

Stop this fraudulent revamp of maep!

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**From:** Hicks, Sheila  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 16, 2016 7:55 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** Parents being kept out of the loop

Hello, I am a parent of a JPS Student. I am appalled and furious that my child's education and opportunity for success is placed in hands of corporations and lawmakers. I am also a tax payer and feel that no parent should be kept in the dark regarding details of how education funding is spent. I vow to be an active participant and do whatever I can to make sure our parents and students are not left out or left behind.

Shelia Hicks RN- BSN

Sent via my Samsung Galaxy, an AT&T 4G LTE smartphone

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**From:** Erica Carter  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 16, 2016 8:55 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Cc:** Carolyn Crawford; Philip Moran  
**Subject:** MAEP Formula Revision Comments

It is hard for me to suggest ways that the formula can be improved given that the issues at my school are a result of underfunding. The areas where I think additional funds could help - the first one is classroom size. Our school has the minimum number of teachers that meets the law, which leads to larger classrooms. My eldest (now in 8th grade) was in a class of 16 in kindergarten, with an assistant. My younger two had far more - upper-twenties I believe. And there is no longer a full time assistant in first grade. My children are in the gifted program, but that teacher is utilized to meet the minimum requirements for gifted classroom time. Gifted classes are often cancelled for testing, science fairs, etc. I definitely see the impact of the continuing education underfunding as I compare my eldest's experience with my youngest's (now in 1st grade).

Another change from when my eldest was in kindergarten and 1st grade is that there are no longer any text books. Everything comes home as photocopies. The one textbook my 8th grader has is probably 10 years old and is not in good shape. We do not have tablets or laptops, and most of the classroom electronics are donated by the PTO. I have attended enough school board meetings to know that my district is trying to make do with the funds that they have. Our taxes are fairly high in our district, and the board is cognizant of this and has only raised the millage once in the last 10 years. I do expect my taxes to increase if MAEP continues to be underfunded.

In the presentation given by EdBuild in Jackson several weeks ago, data was presented indicating that the local contribution to school funds lag behind other states. As suggested, I looked at the map on the EdBuild website, but I didn't see the same results. If anything, Mississippi's millage rates were higher than most other states. Perhaps the data presented in the meeting was a dollar amount, and what I was looking at was percentages. So, my comment here is not to forget that Mississippi is one of the most economically challenged states, and that it would take a far higher percentage of local taxes to match the dollar amount seen in other states. Between increased power rates from the Mississippi Power debacle, and increase wind insurance, increasing taxes would be difficult on my family.

To the MAEP formula itself - it is often criticized as being overly complicated. I have looked at the formula, and it seems extremely straightforward. In the EdBuild presentation, the different factors that impact the individual student cost was discussed - factors such as poverty, giftedness, dyslexia, and other learning disabilities were discussed. Certainly the hearing impaired child in my daughter's school who has an assistant throughout the school day is more costly than my daughter's dyslexia interventions. I get that. But to account for every scenario and apply an individualized cost factor would make the MAEP formula far more complicated. I am also not convinced that the final number would be any different, given that, with the exception of the poverty factors, most of the other disabilities and such will be fairly evenly distributed through the student population. It could make a large difference in small school districts, but less so in larger districts.

I am still confused as to why the MAEP formula needs to be rewritten in the first place. I do hear a lot of talk about administration pay, but that seems to be a problem in individual schools and not throughout Mississippi. It seems to me that corrections could be made as needed, without a total rewrite of the formula, especially since any fixes are most likely a drop in the bucket of the underfunding. The MAEP is a broad formula, but I think it is a good approach and that individual school districts have the leeway to use the funds as needed for

the needs of their individual schools. I like that the current MAEP formula shows a quantity of how much education is being underfunded by our legislature, and I can see the results of the underfunding in my children's schools. I would like to stress that leaving the formula alone is a viable option.

I look forward to seeing the suggestions that EdBuild has, but I also expect that the public be given time and a forum to provide feedback to the recommendations.

Thank-you for the opportunity to provide my input, Erica L Carter

Pass Christian, MS

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 16, 2016 10:55 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** MAEP Funding

Dear Sirs and Madams,

You should get to work and fund MAEP fully instead of stalling for time and pretending to tinker with the formula. The formula was set years years ago. You owe it to our children and our future.

E.M. Whitley

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**From:** Palmer, Carol  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2016 8:31 AM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** funding earmarked for dyslexia services

Good Morning,

I will not be able to attend the meeting to discuss the revamping of the MAEP formula, but I wanted the committee to consider extra funding for students who have been diagnosed with dyslexia. Since Mississippi passed HB1031, all students are to be screened in kindergarten and first grade. Approximately 15 to 20% of our population are dyslexic. Dyslexia screeners, diagnostic testing for dyslexia, and dyslexia therapists require extra funding for a district. Many districts are not in compliance with the dyslexia law because of the lack of funding. If MAEP specifies that the money is only to be used for providing these services to our dyslexic students, we would see tremendous growth in reading.

Sincerely,

Carol Palmer

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Carol Palmer, M.A.T., M.Ed., CALT  
Dyslexia Therapist  
Brandon School Zone  
Brandon, MS 39042

#### **Rankin County School District**

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**From:** Kathy Knight  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2016 8:48 AM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** Public Education in MS

Dear Legislators,

As you examine what is best for public education in our state, I urge you to ensure that any legislation regarding our public schools utilizes an objective formula to determine a base student cost. This formula should keep pace with inflation and any increasing demands on districts. It should ensure that funding is based on needs and avoids swings due to political whims. Funding should be equitable regardless of the wealth of the community the school serves. High achieving school districts should be given more freedom to determine how best to use their funds.

Communities are strengthened by public schools that are equipped to achieve! For our state to succeed, we must have public schools that succeed!

Thanks,

**KATHY KNIGHT, CPA**

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**From:** Thomas, Alice  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2016 12:09 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** Public Meeting

Dear Lt. Governor Tate Reeves and Speaker Philip Gunn,

I am unable to attend the press meeting today regarding MAEP, but would like to extend an invitation for the committee to consider more funding for students diagnosed with dyslexia in our state. It is now estimated that **up to 25%** of the students with reading difficulties are dyslexic. These students can become successful readers if scientifically based reading interventions, using a multi-sensory approach, are implemented by highly qualified dyslexia therapist. Mississippi definitely is moving in the right direction since passing HB1031. Yet, inadequate funding makes it difficult for school districts in the state to properly screen, identify, and provide the intensive instruction required for these students to become successful. MAEP needs to earmark funds to be set aside for **dyslexic students only**. There would be a tremendous increase in test scores, graduation rates, and college pursuits of talented students that continue to "fall through the cracks" in our state. For the dyslexic students of Mississippi, please consider adequate funding.

Sincerely,  
Alice Thomas  
Dyslexia Interventionist

**Rankin County School District**

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**From:** TODD BOSWELL  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2016 1:07 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Cc:** Henry B. Zuber; Brice Wiggins; Charles Busby  
**Subject:** Input on k-12 school funding

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input regarding the funding of our K-12 public schools. My son attends public elementary school in Ocean Springs, and my daughter, a recent graduate of Ocean Springs High School, is currently a freshman at Ole Miss. I am one of the founders of *Fed Up With 50th*, a community group that exists to advocate for adequate funding of Mississippi public schools. When it comes to funding, I simply want us to invest wisely in the education of Mississippi's students. We have the highest rate of child poverty in the nation, and I think we ALL agree that we cannot afford to allow that to continue. Education is a major factor in the economic success of a person and of our state's economy. I am not going to attempt to comment on every single possible aspect of funding, but I do want to comment as follows:

Public education serves the ENTIRE state, and we MUST immediately stop the partisan politics and get down to business on how to educate our children the best that we can.

I really cannot see anything wrong with the approach of either MAEP or with the method recommended by EdBuild to reach a *per student* amount of funding. Each district needs to have enough funding to be able to deliver an adequate education to its students.

First, we must fund based on *enrollment* and not using any other numbers. That should be a given.

As a conservative, I prefer local control. We are not getting local control when it comes to public schools. The layers of control are oppressive- including the federal government and the state government -through the legislatures and the departments of

education at both levels. What I hear from many of you leads me to believe that many legislators do not fully trust local school boards. Thus, centralized government has dictated too many aspects of school. The list includes but certainly is not limited to- cafeteria menus, who a school can hire, salary schedules, who gets a raise, what benefits have to be offered, when school starts and ends, what special services must be offered, how many days must be in the school week and year, etc. The most disturbing thing about government control is that our schools are now told for some subjects exactly *what* must be taught and to some extent *how* it must be taught. The forced Common Core standards (now renamed but they are still Common Core) have completely changed the classroom by controlling the teaching process and by failing to be accompanied by sound textbooks. With School Choice becoming more prevalent in our state, my concern is that this government control is compromising the public schools so that they will not be competitive as School Choice expands.

Some believe that the leadership's goal in reaching a *per student* amount of funding is to allow an easy transition to a system of vouchers/educational accounts because each student will have an amount assigned to him or her under the funding law. While I am not wholly opposed to alternate ways of schooling, I am **EXTREMELY** opposed to creating an uneven playing field where traditional public schools are so controlled by government that they cannot compete with what a private or charter can offer to a student. As someone who was trained to teach (undergraduate before I went to law school), I clearly see that we have damaged our public schools with our government interventions. While many elected leaders are very comfortable with the idea of allowing public funds to go to unregulated private schools, those same leaders have chosen to micromanage the traditional public schools to the point that they are not a place that some parents want to enroll their children. To be blunt- I want experienced teachers and

administrators to make the decisions when it comes to what and how to teach my children. I don't want politicians and government bureaucrats deciding how to run our schools any more than I want them to run our hospitals and doctors' clinics.

**We must stop the endless testing.** It is currently costing us enormous amounts of taxpayer money, and it has had a negative effect on the landscape of classrooms in public schools. In comparing the k-12 school years of my college daughter to my elementary son, I have serious concerns about today's classroom experience. The imposition of the government-imposed tests has changed the way subjects are taught and tested on a daily basis. Not only do I think that some aspects of the educational experience are worse for today's students; I also have never seen the government tests used to individualize the teaching process for students based on how they scored. The only things that I see tests being used for are 1) to rank students and school districts and 2) to identify students and areas for the purpose of expanding access to charter schools. Neither of these objectives help my children at all.

Giving tests that are confusing, not grade-level appropriate, and not aligned to clear learning objectives is not desirable to me as a parent. It makes me want to enroll my child in a private school where this type of testing does not exist. When you realize that my child attends one of the highest ranked schools in the state, it should give you pause that I consider switching to private school. Government control (some of it caused directly by the Mississippi Legislature) has made our public school system worse for its students in significant ways. The forced tests were put in place to make sure schools were teaching students well, but they have ended up being in some ways an impediment to good teaching. The latest revision to rating schools makes it where it is **never enough**. Even if all students are performing at a proficient level, a school is penalized unless it shows *growth* every single year.

Common sense dictates that we should agree on a proficient score at an appropriate grade level, and then let that be the mark of success. Demonstrating that one has shown proficiency of his/her grade level material should be ALL A GOVERNMENT SHOULD ASK of a student and of a teacher. When something is not working the way it was intended, then it needs to be stopped. By the way, in case you are not aware, every government-forced test is kept top secret. Teachers and parents are not allowed to see them. In the 12 years that my children have been forced to take these tests, no one has ever been told what my children missed on those tests. We have no idea what they did not manage to learn from their teachers. As if that is not bad enough, the tests include material that is above the grade level so that they can try to test the advanced students to see just how advanced they are. How does that make sense when the whole testing system was invented just to make sure no child was being left behind? Additionally, we do not even see the scores until we are well into the next school year. These tests are totally useless to my children, yet they have caused so much strife to them. We should not be forced to use taxpayer money to run this flawed testing system. To think that Mississippians are working hard every day to be forced to put children through this process; it is an abuse of taxpayer money and of students.

Finally, I want you to be very aware of the problems that you have caused to districts like Ocean Springs when you have chosen to underfund MAEP, and I would ask that any new law avoid this outcome. In Ocean Springs, we pay the maximum amount of local taxes that we can for our school district. We are at the mercy of the state legislature each year, because we cannot increase local taxes. We pay our state taxes, yet we do not receive the amount of state funding that the law provides under MAEP. One year we could not even afford to pay the total teacher raise that the Legislature mandated, so we had to take money from somewhere

else in order to pay the required increase. Our school district's insurance premiums are shocking as a result of Katrina, and circumstances such as that need to be considered. When we have to run our school on a *per student* basis yet our overhead is higher because of insurance, then our students take that hit. As a community, we are "all in" and are proud of our school district. We really need to be able to count on receiving the state tax dollars that are provided to us by law and to be allowed to operate our district through our excellent school board and administration.

After reading my comments, you can see that I am asking you to give public schools relief from centralized government control. Our schools cannot be financially healthy as long as the decisions that drive costs are being made at a centralized level. Please work toward this goal as it has a huge effect on funding. As many of you advocate for expanded charters and voucher/education accounts, we are watching to see how you will help our traditional public schools to get out from under this government control so that our traditional public schools will be a viable option for parents. Our state constitution gives you the duty to operate free public schools, and the citizens of Mississippi are counting on you.

Robin Reid Boswell

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**From:** Ryan Earley  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2016 3:35 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Cc:** Stu White  
**Subject:** Public Hearing

Points of emphasis to be brought up on our behalf:

1. In-Lieu Of agreements must be grandfathered and protected against sharing with other school districts. These agreements were done at the local level under the assumption the agreement would benefit the local school district without increasing taxes on local citizens. These agreements would not have been done at the local level if the local board of supervisors knew the money would be shared with districts across the state.
2. A phase in period must be adopted limiting both increases/decreases of state funding at the district level.
3. The formula must be a long-term formula that districts can rely on. It must be approved and published such that districts have ample time to build their budgets prior to the fiscal year the formula takes affect. Any updates to the formula on an annual basis should be approved and published giving districts ample time to plan ahead.
4. The formula should provide equal funding to like students regardless of the local tax base. Example, a poor gifted student from a wealthy community should have the same funding as a poor gifted student in a poor community.
5. Consolidation of inefficient/ineffective districts is preferred over giving districts additional funding to operate their inefficient/ineffective districts.

**Ryan Earley & Stu White**  
*Assistant Business Manager & Business Manager*  
Jackson County School District  
4701 Col. Vickery Rd  
Vance, MS 39565



**Laura Hipp**

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**From:** Sissy Lynn  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2016 1:41 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Cc:** Joel Bomgar; Walter Michel; Cory Wilson; Cory Wilson  
**Subject:** Thoughts on MAEP Revamp

To Whom It May Concern,

I'm an actively involved mother of two public school students in Ridgeland, and I'm writing to you to express my concerns about the initiative to develop a new education funding formula since I will be unable to attend the public hearing this afternoon.

While I'm always hopeful that our Legislature will put greater emphasis on improving outcomes for public education in our state, the lack of transparency throughout this process deeply concerns me. When members of the media made a public records request seeking information about the EdBuild contract, a legislative committee denied their request and adopted a new policy mandating that all contracts be confidential. If there's nothing to hide, why the secrecy?

Given the importance of education funding to our state, it's troubling that members of this legislative committee are not allowing public scrutiny of the contract. How can we be expected to add an informed perspective to the process when the details are hidden from our view? For example, what criteria were used to award this important contract to an organization that's only been in existence for less than two years? What are the stated objectives for the contract award?

Considering the fact that our state leaders have only fully funded MAEP twice in nearly 20 years, I wonder why it's necessary to spend taxpayer money to revamp a formula that hasn't been given a chance to work. I would love to see how our schools would improve if MAEP were fully funded for two consecutive years. I believe our test scores would improve and our students would achieve greater academic success. While many of the words that EdBuild uses to describe fair and adequate education funding sound positive and constructive, I have serious concerns about their ties to the school choice movement and its backers.

If you're truly seeking public input, I ask that you continue to hold public hearings in other areas of the state, and I hope that you will give more than three days' notice for such meetings. Please also consider scheduling these meetings at a more convenient time than 4 p.m. when parents who'd likely attend are picking up their children from school and taking them to after-school activities.

Finally, I'd like you to consider the following when reviewing the funding formula:

- Funding should be equitable – students in high-poverty districts should have comparable resources as students in more affluent districts.
- The base student cost should be determined by an objective formula that considers inflation, student need and the ever-increasing demands placed on districts (such as the exorbitant costs of high-stakes testing).
- Base student cost should increase, not decrease.
- The education funding formula should not be used to further a political agenda, such as education vouchers, ESAs or charter school expansion.

Even though my children are blessed to attend Ridgeland public schools, which are part of the highly successful Madison County School District, I still see the harmful effects of underfunding every day. Our students don't have enough textbooks to take home, classrooms are overcrowded with student-to-teacher ratios that make it hard for teachers to give individualized instruction and manage discipline. Because of chronic underfunding, more pressure is put on our PTOs to bridge the gap to help support technology initiatives or fund playground equipment. And, of course, our teachers pay for school supplies out of their own pockets.

I urge you to do everything possible to make sure that more of our tax dollars are directed toward our public school students. The future of our state is at stake.

Thanks for your time.

Sincerely,

Sissy Lynn  
Ridgeland, MS  
Madison County School District

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**From:** Thursday, November 17, 2016 3:37 PM  
**Sent:** Schoollfinance; D. Stephen Holland; Shane Aguirre; Jerry Turner; wendellbryan@gmail.com;  
**To:** Randy P. Boyd; Chad McMahan  
**Subject:** public hearing/ MAEP

Dear Ones, with the power to CHANGE MISSISSIPPI,

How would properly funding K-12 help our state? We would have more citizens with higher paying jobs. Those citizens would pay taxes on their income. If everyone was educated then we would spend MUCH LESS money shelling out for services that educated people pay for themselves. Those big companies, that the state seems to work so hard to pull into Mississippi, would come knocking for a spot in our state. Public schools bring people together where they can get to know each other. When we get to know our neighbors we develop friendship and love for one another.

We need to make PUBLIC EDUCATION (K-12) the best option for all Mississippians. The saddest thing to me (living in a somewhat rural area) is to watch people buy the lie that a private school is a better option. A hard working middle class family piling all of their resources together just so that their child can be educated K-12 at a private school causes them to have less money to expose their children to travel through family vacations. They lack of family time because of the need to work extra hours. This is before we even take into consideration the impoverished child.

When working on funding for our children to improve our state please remember:

- 1....That we would like to afford all of our children the ability to compete with children from all over the USA and around the world.
- 2... please establish a formula-driven base student cost that keeps up with inflation.
- 3... One that provides money for new "laws and demands" on districts (it should be illegal to demand something that is not funded).
- 4.... Is a solid promise to fund...not something to be jerked around and never intended to fund because a new tribe has invaded the State Senate / House and wants to suddenly do something else with PROMISED money.

5...the fund should ensure that all school districts, low in tax revenues, have funding on par with more wealthy communities BUT avoids shifting essential school funding to the local level in communities with more wealth.

REMEMBER: Mississippi is in this "low spot" because of a history of NOT FUNDING PUBLIC EDUCATION.

Thank you for giving me a way to communicate through this public hearing. Please keep the public informed and able to see all that our state is attempting to do for its citizens. Let the public view contracts. Be grateful that your constituents care about what our government is doing.

Ann Blair Huffman  
Tupelo, MS

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**From:** Valerie Alley  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2016 4:23 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** MAEP Revamp

To Whom It May Concern,

I'm an actively involved mother of two public school students in Pearl, and I'm writing to you to express my concerns about the initiative to develop a new education funding formula since I will be unable to attend the public hearing this afternoon, since I am volunteering tonight at PHS for our fantastic theatre department - one that is 100% self funded.

Considering the fact that our state leaders have only fully funded MAEP twice in nearly 20 years, I think it would be a great idea to see how our schools would improve if MAEP were fully funded for two consecutive years. I believe our test scores would improve and our students would achieve greater academic success. While many of the words that EdBuild uses to describe fair and adequate education funding sound positive and constructive, I have serious concerns about their ties to the school choice movement and its backers. I wonder why it's necessary to spend taxpayer money to revamp a formula that hasn't been given a chance to work.

If you're truly seeking public input, I ask that you continue to hold public hearings in other areas of the state, and I hope that you will give more than three days' notice for such meetings. Please also consider scheduling these meetings at a more convenient time than 4 p.m. when parents like me are still at work, or are picking up their children from school and taking them to after-school activities.

Finally, I'd like you to consider the following when reviewing the funding formula:

- Make this process transparent and include opportunities for parents and educators to participate. Send out surveys. Hold public meets at times convenient to working parents and educators. We are best suited to know what our kids need only daily basis.
- Be prepared to 'show your work' so that the public knows how you arrived at your recommendations.
- Make a commitment that the base student cost will be the same or greater than the base student cost in the current formula. We cannot afford to go backwards.
- Include a plan to keep pace with inflation, to gradually rise to the Southeast average
- Funding should be equitable – students in high-poverty districts should have comparable resources as students in more affluent districts.
- The base student cost should be determined by an objective formula that considers inflation, student need and the ever-increasing demands placed on districts (such as the exorbitant costs of high-stakes testing).
- Base student cost should increase, not decrease.
- The education funding formula should be not be used to further a political agenda, such as education vouchers, ESAs or charter school expansion.

Even though my children are blessed to attend Pearl Public School District, I still see the harmful effects of underfunding every day. Our students don't have enough textbooks to take home, classrooms are overcrowded with student-to-teacher ratios that make it hard for teachers to give individualized instruction and manage discipline. We have leaks in roofs and buses that are aging. I shudder to think what less affluent districts deal with on a daily basis. Because of chronic underfunding, more pressure is put on our PTOs to bridge the gap to help support technology initiatives or fund playground equipment. And, of course, our teachers pay for school supplies out of their own pockets.

I urge you to do everything possible to make sure that more of our tax dollars are directed toward our public school students. The future of our state is at stake.

Thanks for your time.

Sincerely,

Valerie Alley  
Pearl, MS  
Pearl Public School District

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**From:** Tim Carter  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2016 4:40 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** Question

Please explain the bankruptcy as a good opportunity for education revolution statement made by your CEO

Tim Carter

Sent from my iPhone

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**From:** philip eide  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2016 10:26 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** Secret government is bad government

The tax payer funded contract with Ed Build should be made public.

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**From:** Marian Fortner  
**Sent:** Friday, November 18, 2016 8:29 AM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** EdBuild and Mississippi Education

To Our Mississippi Lawmakers and Edbuild,

Yesterday I attended the hearing on the Mississippi Adequate Education Program at our state capitol out of deep concern for transparency in our state capitol first and foremost, and also for the purpose of the hearing, to gather input as the legislature makes decisions on the MAEP formula. The education of our young is vital to our future and regrettably, EdBuild, the consulting firm hired by the legislature, could hear from only a very small few, forceful as they were. I know of few experts in their field who would advise another based on such scant review. I know of fewer still the businesses that would pay and rely on such thin advice.

To that end, I invite EdBuild and the Legislature to my community to come and see, talk and listen. I live in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, where funding has been cut and students with hopeful futures are seeing those hopes dashed.

An example: A number of students had begun to learn how to plan musical instruments, introducing them to a cultural refinement otherwise beyond their grasp. In a state that gave birth to the Blues, one would think this would be a crowning achievement in a thriving school district. These students had plans to travel, an incentive to practice, commit. Imagine if these students, through their hard work, could travel and see beyond their present circumstances. Imagine those students as adults, thriving in Mississippi, and encouraging generations beyond.

A Jewish midrash says, to save one life is to save the world. If we invest deep care in the life of each of the 490,000 students we presently have, then we have contributed mightily to society and the life of this nation.

And if we fail: Charles Dickens wrote so long ago in industrial England:

*"'Forgive me if I am not justified in what I ask,' said Scrooge, looking intently at the Spirit's robe,' but I see something strange, and not belonging to yourself, protruding from your skirts. Is it a foot or a claw.'*

*'It might be a claw, for the flesh there is upon it,' was the Spirit's sorrowful reply. 'Look here.'*

*From the foldings of its robe, it brought two children; wretched, abject, frightful, hideous, miserable. They knelt down at its feet, and clung upon the outside of its garment.*

*'Oh, Man. look here. Look, look, down here.' exclaimed the Ghost.*

*They were a boy and a girl. Yellow, meagre, ragged, scowling, wolfish; but prostrate, too, in their humility. Where graceful youth should have filled their features out, and touched them with its freshest tints, a stale and shrivelled*

*hand, like that of age, had pinched, and twisted them, and pulled them into shreds. Where angels might have sat enthroned, devils lurked, and glared out menacing. No change, no degradation, no perversion of humanity, in any grade, through all the mysteries of wonderful creation, has monsters half so horrible and dread.*

*Scrooge started back, appalled. Having them shown to him in this way, he tried to say they were fine children, but the words choked themselves, rather than be parties to a lie of such enormous magnitude.*

*'Spirit. are they yours.' Scrooge could say no more.*

*'They are Man's,' said the Spirit, looking down upon them. 'And they cling to me, appealing from their fathers. This boy is Ignorance. This girl is Want. Beware them both, and all of their degree, but most of all beware this boy, for on his brow I see that written which is Doom, unless the writing be erased. Deny it.' cried the Spirit, stretching out its hand towards the city. 'Slander those who tell it ye. Admit it for your factious purposes, and make it worse. And abide the end.'*

*'Have they no refuge or resource.' cried Scrooge.*

*'Are there no prisons.' said the Spirit, turning on him for the last time with his own words. 'Are there no workhouses.'"*

- A Christmas Carol, Stave 3: The Second of the Three Spirits

We have our prisons. Let's find a better way.

Respectfully,

The Rev. Marian D. Fortner  
Hattiesburg, Mississippi



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**From:** Bracey, Jerry  
**Sent:** Friday, November 18, 2016 12:02 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** School Funding

I have read several articles concerning school funding in Mississippi. As a tax payer, educated in Mississippi, I would like to offer these recommendations: Consolidate school districts, decrease the number of school superintendents by at least 25%. The savings would be huge over the next several years. Actually as that takes shape I do believe a further reduction could be realized for a total of 30 – 35 % overall reduction. Outsource school busing. Outsource the cafeteria food service. This would decrease the amount of money spent on salaries, buses, maintenance of buses, gasoline, personnel benefits, and so on. I know this would be difficult to impose. However we must look at all ways possible to save money and not have to raise taxes. For me, reducing school superintendents is huge! We raise enough taxes to support education. It just needs to be managed tighter and cuts will have to be made to prevent raising taxes more.

Respectfully

Jerry Bracey

Ocean Springs Mississippi

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**From:** Debra Peterson  
**Sent:** Friday, November 18, 2016 3:44 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** At MS Legislators school Funding hearing Sun Herald 11-18-16

I as a voter and taxpayer in Harrison County really need to be convinced that money is the answer to our education problem. I don't have children in the school system but I will have a grandchild. I agree there is only so much tax monies to be spread out in our state and just because the schools think that they need more the concern is will there ever be enough spent on education. Also when the school receives more what other areas are being reduced. I know the only answer to this is informing the taxpayers on both side on how the funds are being spent and not just sighting money as the answers to all the problems.

Thanks

Debra Peterson

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**From:** Aubrey  
**Sent:** Saturday, November 19, 2016 6:20 AM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** At Mississippi school funding hearing, many say spend more

There should be a salary schedule for school administrators just as it is with classroom teachers. The salaries for administrators have gotten out of hand. When the salary for the state superintendent of education exceeds that of the governor then we have our priorities wrong.

There should be more emphasis placed on consolidating school districts. There is only one school district in Desoto County. Why is there a need for more than one school district per county?

Sent from my iPhone

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**From:** Gigi Tanksley  
**Sent:** Saturday, November 19, 2016 7:52 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** Possible Changes to Mississippi's Education Funding Formula

When I was in public schools we had an art teacher, a music teacher, sped teacher, gifted teacher, teacher's aid in each class and every grade level. The art and music followed us through elementary school and on into high school.

Times have changed I understand, heck, my grandkids use an iPad for their math classes.

Still, each and every school in the public school systems in Mississippi ought to have available funding to staff the school. Teachers should be tested and hired based on their ability not on who they know on the school board.

Nor should they be hired straight out of college because they work cheap. There are a lot of experienced teachers who would gladly teach if it was worth it.

Communication between counselors and parents should be ongoing.

If you fully and consistently fund education then all these things can happen.

I say fully fund our schools so our children can compete with larger states for jobs and a competitive salary.

Gigi Tanksley

Ethel, MS

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**From:** David Umfress  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 22, 2016 12:10 AM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** Input on Public School Support

**Importance:** High

Thank you for soliciting public input about the MAEP. First of all, I am a retired educator with almost 50 years in public education in Mississippi and in an adjoining state-----in that time I've seen just about anything and everything that can be imagined in education. But, I believe that I've attained a pretty high level of knowledge and "expertise" in the area of public education through my longevity in the field.

I support the MAEP program and believe the only thing wrong with it is the legislature's refusal to fully fund the formula. After all these years, I'm more convinced than ever that the only way Mississippi is ever going to get off the bottom is through improving public education. I don't think our state leadership believes in public education. If they supported education, they would be trying to increase real support and not be trying to drain off funds for charter schools, etc. I know there are problems in some districts, especially in the western side of the state, but trying to divert funds is not the way to solve any of their problems. I don't think it's right to take public funds and give vouchers, etc, to private or charter schools. I'm not convinced that our legislative leadership will do the "right thing" in the question of public education support. I suspect there's another motive that's not in the best interest of our public schools. They want to dismantle the MAEP program and reduce the state's commitment to our kids. And, they want to move the support of public schools from the state to the local district. This will not work, as many of our local districts do not have an adequate tax base to do so. This would require a great increase in local taxes, which people cannot afford. The results of such action will be readily apparent in the 2019 elections---people will remember what the legislature did and did not do.

Sincerely,  
J. D. Umfress

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**From:** Richard Wilbourn  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 22, 2016 4:59 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** Comments of Richard Wilbourn on formulation of a new Education Funding Formula

Tuesday, November 22, 2016

Dear Sir:

It is my understanding all Mississippians have been invited to submit suggestions/concerns about the school funding formula you are working on. Thank you for this opportunity. Unlike the source of the hundreds of other comments you no doubt are receiving, I in no way depend on any income from the education industry. I am not a professional educator, an education administrator or someone who sells to the education industry. However, I am a father of school aged children and a taxpayer. My opinions are motivated solely by concern for a system that compares disappointingly with most other states (not to mention most developed democracies) and is expensive.

1. According to “professional educators” and the education establishment, not enough money has been devoted to provide Mississippi students a quality education. Of course, for them, there never is enough money and no affordable formula will satisfy them. According to the US Dept. of Education, total expenditures for public elementary and secondary schools in the United States amounted to **\$620 billion** in 2012–13, or **\$12,296** per public school student. I have a child in private religious school and one in public school. The private school student’s tuition is around \$8000 per year and she scores in the top 10% of students on standardized tests. She has also qualified for the Duke Tip’s program for academically gifted students. How can her school do so much for her at so little cost? And why do the public schools do far less with far more? Yet, the voices of public education continuously tell us that they need more “resources”. Their funding appetite is insatiable. Therefore, there is no affordable formula that can satisfy them.

Politically, you may need to look like you tried. However, since the formula you devise will in some way be related to expectations over the amount of anticipated education appropriations, you can’t make the education establishment happy.

2. Sadly, it appears that Mississippi Democrats’ objective is not to improve education. If that were the case, they would have done something serious about the poor state of public education in Mississippi when they were in charge. They surely would not have opposed charter schools which have worked extremely well in Louisiana, Tennessee, Wisconsin and other states. They would object to greater federal mandates over what can and can’t be taught. They surely would not have opposed making Mississippi’s school ranking system more objective and transparent. They would be proposing concrete measures to increase the teacher/administrator ratio. They surely would not have opposed appointed school superintendents. They would be receptive to a limited education voucher program for disadvantaged students.

As is obvious, Mississippi Democrats aren’t interested in improving education. Therefore, their unbridled criticism and complete rejection of any proposal you present

(unless it's one that leads Mississippi to bankruptcy) only means your proposal fails to enrich Democrats' political base. It does not mean your proposal is flawed.

3. Formulas that substantially restrict the Legislature's appropriation control over State funds are doomed to fail. As is the case with the current formula, the Legislature will just ignore it. A rigid formula also breeds a sense of entitlement within the public education establishment. They feel far more free to attack those Legislators who vote to deviate from the formula. Those Legislators are then accused of "interfering" when in fact they are just doing their job of managing the State's fiscal resources. A good formula must:
  - a. Require "adjustment" by the Legislature on a regularly scheduled basis. The education establishment needs to know that the Legislature still has power and influence to punish bad performance, cheating on the school ratings formula and politicization of education. A regular formula adjustment process helps accomplish that.
  - b. The formula needs to include a scheduled complete overhaul every 10 to 12 years. In fact, any new formula you devise should contain an expiration date. The complete overhaul should include multiple public hearings around the state that truly give the education bureaucracy the chance to have its say and also show that the education unions/associations are earning their fees/dues representing their member administrators and teachers. Likewise, there is a need to have a very public forum where angry teachers and parents can voice complaints about their children's schools – both real and imagined. But in doing so, the process should demonstrate that the Legislature takes education seriously and is doing its job.
  - c. There needs to be room in the formula for the Legislature to make politically motivated adjustments. That's just reality. Politicians will always want to reward their supporters and the education budget has the biggest pot of money with which to do that. If you don't account for this political reality, no one will have a vested interest in making your formula succeed. Disregard for the current formula is a perfect example. Republicans don't follow now and Democrats didn't follow it when Billy McCoy was in charge. There needs to be enough discretionary funds for members of both parties to reward their friends.
4. To the extent possible, the formula must be competition friendly. In other words, it should easily accommodate education alternatives that promote competition in case the Legislature wants to enact such measures. E.g., expanded charter schools, vouchers for private schools, greater student migration across district lines, and the like. A formula which is written in a way that must be significantly re-written if the Legislature chooses to enact competition friendly measures means conservatives will be more likely to oppose your plan. Also, merely having a formula that is adaptable to competition friendly measures will in and of itself motivate public school administrators to be more efficient and effective.

The Heritage Foundation has done significant work on how to make public education work better. See <http://www.heritage.org/issues/education> I hope you will reflect on its advice.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

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**From:** Jack  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 23, 2016 4:42 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** redefining MAEO

To our Legislators;

As a parent and a grandparent I ask you to respect the wishes of the thousands of your fellow Mississippians who want our children to have the sufficient funds to learn how to be contributing, intelligent adults who will want to stay and live in Mississippi.

The apparent vengeance that you are taking out on the thousands of voters who supported a Constitutional Amendment to fully fund MAEP after you refused to do so is not worthy of your best public spirit.

Please give this a more rational public input than the very brief, poorly attended meeting of a few days ago.

Sincerely, Jack Reed, Jr.



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**From:** ambergeiser |  
**Sent:** Monday, November 28, 2016 10:29 AM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** Factors to consider

When reviewing the funding formula, please consider the facility needs of districts. Many districts have old buildings that need major repairs or they have a need for new buildings. Unfortunately, the tax base is not adequate to fund a bond issue. This is becoming a common issue across the state.

Thanks,  
Amber Geiser  
Biloxi, MS

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**From:** Bill Rose  
**Sent:** Monday, November 28, 2016 10:44 AM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** Edbuild contract

Folks,

Leave it alone. If you're not going to leave it alone, then do it in the open, where the public who pays for the schools and who pays your salaries can see and hear and hold you accountable. So far, the lack of transparency and in fact the overt effort to obscure what's happening really stinks. Why not let we the people see and hear? Why not let we the people speak? Why not let Edbuild speak in a public hearing? Sorry, but this whole process has a smell to it.

Bill Rose

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**From:** Shelmire Suzette  
**Sent:** Monday, November 28, 2016 12:18 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** School finance

Don't even THINK about moving money from our public schools to finance some "unknown" charter schools!

YOU NEED to completely finance our public schools . If you do that and that doesn't help then you can start charter schools. Until then you need to give the public schools what they need to do their job!

I don't understand your reasoning. I feel that you are in the hands of lobbyists and they are interested in the money you pull out of our under financed public schools!  
sincerely,  
Suzette Shelmire

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**From:** Kay Tyler  
**Sent:** Monday, November 28, 2016 5:38 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** MAEP

Good evening,

Please leave the MAEP program as it is. It is just needs to fully funded for now on!!!!

Best regards,  
Kay Tyler

Rabbi Debra Kassoff

Thank you for this opportunity.

I speak today as the rabbi and spiritual leader of Hebrew Union Congregation in Greenville, Mississippi; as a member of Beth Israel Congregation here in Jackson and its director of religious education and youth programs; as the mother of two Jackson Public School District students; and as an affiliate of Working Together Jackson.

I have to begin by saying that while the recommendations and findings of EdBuild seem sound, this whole process strikes me as a bit suspect, considering that this legislature has fully funded MAEP fewer than a handful of times since it was passed almost 20 years ago. Why spend more money on a study that finds that essentially what we should be doing is fully funding MAEP? I would be interested to know what the reasoning is behind this course of action.

Jewish tradition teaches that “the world is sustained only by the breath of schoolchildren” (Shulchan Aruch). In other words, it is for the sake of schoolchildren, for the education of each new generation, that the world exists. Education of our citizens should be our highest priority as a society. I know that a lot of business interests motivate those who govern our state, but have we not yet established clearly enough that an educated population is key to a successful economy? Do we not see the states with the best school systems also finding the most success economically? When it comes to education, the budget should not be seen as a zero-sum game. What is good for public education is good for the state.

That being said, here are my priorities in public education funding:

It should be sufficient to allow Mississippi students to compete well with the children of every other state and country.

I wish to see in any education funding legislation considered by this legislature an objective, formula-driven base student cost that:

- keeps pace with inflation and considers increasing demands on districts
- ensures that school funding is based on what schools need
- avoids subjecting school funding to political whims

Furthermore, it must include a means for providing equitable resources for all children that:

- ensures that children in low wealth communities have funding that is on par with the funding in higher wealth communities
- avoids shifting more of the school funding burden to the local level in high wealth communities

Finally, as a parent in a low-income school district, I have tired of hearing the cost-per-student numbers for our district compared with much wealthier, higher-income, and more successful districts. Anywhere you go, impoverished communities must spend more on educating their students if they are to be successful, because low-income students come with many disadvantages and require many more services and interventions than their wealthier peers.

Please stand up for justice, stand up for education, do right by the children and the families of this state.

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Saturday, December 03, 2016 3:30 PM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** school finance

I have the following questions/concerns:.

Define base formula. What does that guarantee in the way of a child receiving a basic education?

If the "base formula" does not take into account and adjust for the difference in costs for more rural ( and poorer) districts (about 75% or higher of the total) to recruit high quality and specialty subject teachers as compared to school districts in more densely populated areas, where education specialists are less scarce and difficult to recruit and retain, how will there be equitable access across the state for students to receive the same basic education when urban districts (relatively speaking) may have more access to teachers and support personnel needed to address the BASIC student academic needs?

How can a formula adjustment be made that impacts the entire public school system in the state without gaining more information through additional small group focus groups across the state with parents, students, teachers as well as school administrators statewide? Many parents are not internet "savvy".

For a fair review of the state's diversity in current funding at the local level, why can't the consultants spend 2-3 days in the state touring communities of different sizes, demographics and average median income to understand better challenges the face in completing their assignment in a fair and responsible manner? Numbers and reports most often do not tell the whole picture.

Cathy Grace  
Tupelo, MS

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**From:** Louis Bridges  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 13, 2016 6:21 AM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Cc:** Nancy Loomer  
**Subject:** Re: MAEP revamp

I just saw on the news that Edbuild would be on coast visiting ocean springs upper elementary, that is one of the newest schools in the coast and where a lot of the kids that do not require free and reduced lunch attend.

Their choice of school should have been discussed with the public before a selection and they should have chosen a school from each of the coastal counties that are the oldest ones built so that a true picture of how the shortfall of money over the years has delapidated the schools and also be able to see the conditions the teachers have to contend with trying teach with outdated materials. It is beginning to look as if you are hand selecting schools to justify the formula you are wanting to implement without truly wanting to increase school funding.

v/r

Louis Bridges

Sent from my iPhone

On Nov 29, 2016, at 10:24 AM, Schoolfinance <[Schoolfinance@mail.house.state.ms.us](mailto:Schoolfinance@mail.house.state.ms.us)> wrote:

Thank you, Louis, for your response. We appreciate you taking the time to share your thoughts.

Staff of Speaker Phillip Gunn and Lt. Gov. Tate Reeves

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**From:** Louis Bridges [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 15, 2016 7:50 AM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Cc:** Nancy Loomer  
**Subject:** MAEP revamp

If MDE would change the policy on class size to 12 with max of 15, this would put it at the ratio of most private and charter schools. Then the teachers would be able to achieve better with their students. The schools in MS have not kept up with technology in all districts and that should also be considered when looking at school funding.

Teachers are parents also, their wages should be compatible to states surrounding MS. This would keep some of our better teachers from leaving.

It would be a nice thing for all legislators to visit schools in the rural areas to see how teachers are having to spend their own money sometimes to try an ensure their classrooms and students have basic supplies.

MS should go to some standardization of classrooms, block schedule or class schedule. This way all schools are evaluated the same.

All K - 5 classes should have teacher assistants in the classroom, these are the crucial years of ensuring are children are grasping the basics and it is incumbent upon all in legislature to ensure the children are given a fair chance at success.

v/r

Louis Bridges



Sent from my iPhone

On Nov 10, 2016, at 2:55 PM, Nancy Loomer <[nloome@msparentscampaign.org](mailto:nloome@msparentscampaign.org)> wrote:

<image001.jpg>

Dear Louis,

The school funding revamp remains a pressing concern for public school supporters. Here's the latest...

Public hearings about possible changes to the Mississippi Adequate Education Program (MAEP) have not yet been scheduled, however, Lt. Gov. Reeves and Speaker Gunn have set up an **email address for the public to use to provide input**. You can send your thoughts and suggestions to: [schoolfinance@ls.ms.gov](mailto:schoolfinance@ls.ms.gov). **Please weigh in** on the factors you believe are critical to consider in any changes that are made to the way our children's education is funded.

Funding for our public schools should be sufficient to allow Mississippi students to compete well with the children in every other state and country.

These components are absolutely necessary to include in Mississippi's school funding law:

1. An objective, **formula-driven** base student cost that:

- keeps pace with inflation and considers increasing demands on districts
- ensures that school funding is based on what schools need
- avoids subjecting school funding to political whims

2. A means for providing **equitable resources** for all children that:

- ensures that children in low wealth communities have funding that is on par with the funding in higher wealth communities
- avoids shifting more of the school funding burden to the local level in high wealth communities

In October, EdBuild, the firm the leadership hired to recommend changes to the MAEP, met with state lawmakers. The firm's representative promoted a "fair" student funding system that uses a base student cost-plus multipliers to ensure individual student needs are met. A good bit of time was spent explaining how the multipliers would provide additional funding for students with various needs. Almost no time was spent discussing how the base cost would be determined. Because the base cost will be the driver of all student funding, **details about how this component will be determined from year to year are of critical importance**. [See vital information about this issue here.](#)

Please continue to encourage your legislators to insist on a formula that moves Mississippi forward, not backward. Our children deserve nothing less!

Gratefully,

Nancy

*If you value the efforts of The Parents' Campaign and would like for our work to continue, click [here](#) to support our donation.*

<image002.jpg>

<image002.jpg>

222 North President Street, Suite 102  
Jackson, Mississippi 39201  
Phone 601.961.4551  
[www.msparentscampaign.org](http://www.msparentscampaign.org)

*If you no longer wish to receive emails from The Parents' Campaign, simply reply to this email with UNSUBSCR your subject line.*

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Families as Allies  
840 E. River Place, Suite 500  
Jackson, MS 39202



## Feedback for EdBuild

*Families as Allies is the only statewide organization run by and for families of children with mental health challenges. We support each other and work together to make things better for our children.*

- We appreciate the opportunity to be part of the discussion about how to best meet the needs of children with disabilities in schools.
- Approaches to helping students with disabilities should always be as individualized as possible and be done in partnership with families and the students themselves.
- Poverty and lack of resources are huge challenges in Mississippi. Any kind of funding formula must ensure that all children have the basic things they need to learn and be safe and healthy – books, working plumbing, and safe school buildings are just a few examples.
- We agree that funds that are directed to the classroom are a priority. At the same time, there are many things outside the classroom that support quality learning – for example, well trained bus drivers who help children arrive safely at school, training that helps teachers be more responsive to students, etc.
- We encourage you to consider how much money is being spent on attorneys to avoid serving children with special needs rather than simply serving the children with that same money.
- Our mission is to make sure families are partners in their children's care. Open meetings and many avenues for public comment facilitate the greatest exchange of ideas and the most likely avenues to develop strategies to help the most children succeed. We encourage you to maximize those strategies for the greatest amount of transparency.

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**From:** Jay Fike  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 14, 2016 8:09 AM  
**To:** Schoolfinance  
**Cc:** Dixie  
**Subject:** school funding

It was good to see representatives from MAEP visit the coast in there preparedness to come up with next year's funding formula. However i think it's imperative to visit more than one school, the report on wlox stated you visited Oscean springs upper elementary, if you visited more I apologize. I know that visiting more than one can be time consuming.

If not already in play may I suggest an annual or even bi annual meeting with the areas superintendents and or teachers in an attempt to get more of there concerns and needs addressed. It can be very trying for teachers to voice there needs or concerns in an open forum in front of there administrators, I may even suggest that teachers have the means to communicate with you with out fear of reprisal for relaying how certain funds are used. After all they are the ones that know rather the funds are adequate. Thanks for what you do, and may your eyes be open to the true need of ALL or schools.

Regards  
Jay Fike  
Proud parent of OSSD.

Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android

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**From:** Wayne Lennep  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 29, 2016 5:28 PM  
**To:** rebecca@edbuild.org  
**Cc:** Schoolfinance  
**Subject:** MS school funding solutions

Rebecca Sibilia  
Founder/CEO

EdBuild

Dear Ms. Sibilia,

As a citizen and an alderman from Moss Point, MS, I am very pleased that EdBuild will be making recommendations for improving our education funding formula and spending priorities in Mississippi. Your EdBuild team is to be commended for pursuing and identifying sensible, innovative ways to help improve education funding in Mississippi and other states. To me, that is a much better approach than divisive ballot initiatives and lawsuits that others have pushed in the past.

I believe many of our statewide funding issues can be helped from the local level through more consolidation and by changing the laws that control how local education revenues are raised, collected, and distributed.

While much attention in Mississippi has been focused in state funding of MAEP, there are also great inequities in funding from local sources throughout the state that, if addressed, could greatly reduce the burden on state funding and create much more efficient and equitable local funding. I would like to suggest looking at Jackson County as one example of inequities in "local" education funding.

In Jackson County, where I serve as an Alderman for the City of Moss Point, there are four school districts. According to the 2014-2015 State Superintendents Report, locally, across the four school districts in Jackson County, about \$105.8 million was collected in local school taxes. About half of that amount goes to just one school district.

Out of \$105.8 million, \$47.7 million or 45% of all local school taxes throughout Jackson County went to one district- the Pascagoula-Gautier School District.

About \$18.5 million, or only 17.5% went to the Ocean Springs School District which has almost 24% of the total students in the county's four school districts.

Even the Jackson County School District, which is the largest district with 38.5% of all students, received only 28.5% of all local county-wide school taxes.

The smallest district, Moss Point received about \$9.4 million which is actually in line with its number of students, but, because of its own smaller tax base, the tax burden falls disproportionately on residential taxes.

In the Moss Point Municipal Separate School District, one "school mil" produces about \$140,000. But, just to the south, in the neighboring, adjacent Pascagoula-Gautier School District, one school mil produces about \$1,000,000. Yes, a million. The biggest reason for such disparity is that so much of our large industrial tax base in Jackson County is concentrated on the coast within the boundaries of the Pascagoula-Gautier School District. Taxes from the Chevron refinery alone make up about half of PGSD's local revenues. That doesn't even include revenues from Ingalls Shipbuilding or the Gulf LNG terminal, which will potentially add tens of millions more in local education revenues.

These large industries employ people who live in every part of the county. Every tax paying citizen in the county, even if they live in a city, shares in providing these large industries with millions in tax exemptions and economic incentives.

To put it into perspective, school taxes collected from the Chevron refinery alone are more than all of the local school taxes collected by Ocean Springs, and would almost equal Moss Point's entire school budget from all sources.

Over the past two decades, the city of Moss Point has lost key industries including International Paper and Rohm-Haas Chemical. The burden of local funding for Moss Point schools falls heavily and increasingly on residential tax payers, which is a limited and shrinking resource. This also deprives the City of badly needed funding for basic municipal services. Roads and infrastructure in the city are in deplorable condition.

This lack of local funding ability for some districts, in turn also results in a heavier reliance on state MAEP funding. Jackson County is just one example of where the burden on MAEP could be reduced if the enormous local resources were more fairly and efficiently shared across all four districts in the county.

In my discussions on this topic, I often say that something is terribly wrong when I can stand inside a district where a school mil is worth \$1,000,000 and throw a #2 pencil into a district where a mil is worth less than \$150,000. How can it make sense that two districts directly adjacent to each other can have such a difference in their local funding resources? This scenario is likely replicated in many other areas of the state. Heinz/Rankin/Madison; Desoto; Lafayette; Lee; Lowndes are just a few other counties that come to mind as possibilities. Legislators have pointed out, that many districts are sitting on large revenue bases, while at the same time the legislature struggles with the MAEP funding every year. What's even more unfair is the fact that a school mil in some of those districts is worth 9 or 10 times more than a mil in a district right next door, even within the same county

I realize that these numbers do not tell the whole funding story because I did not include state and federal sources. It is true that many of the funding gaps are mitigated by MAEP, and some federal funds. But, why is that necessary to the extent that it is? Does that make the local inequities any less unfair? It is all too obvious that much of the solution to education funding exists locally.

I suggest the following possible changes to help solve this problem:

1. Change laws so that local school tax revenues from large industry may be shared across all schools county wide, regardless of what district the industrial site is physically located within. I don't know what that number would be, but for example, if the number were to be \$100 million: Any revenues from real or assessed values over \$100 million could be divided up by all school districts with each county, based on enrollment or average daily attendance.
2. Consolidate more school districts into county-wide districts, so that each district has a larger shared local funding pool. This would guarantee that all schools in the area share in all local funding. Of course this would negate the need for suggestion #1.
3. As for State funding, allocations should be based on enrollment numbers rather than average daily attendance. Districts must plan based on enrollment but are currently funded based on average attendance.

Inequities in local education funding should be just as much a part of the conversation as that of state funding. This may actually be a big part of the statewide solution.

Consolidating schools into one district per county would help enormously, but it will take unselfish, broad minded political will to do that. And changing or challenging laws that govern local taxing authority and revenue distribution will ruffle plenty of feathers as some short sided officials will want to protect their own empires. But it's a fight worth having and deserves to be argued and allowed to work its way through the courts if necessary.

These changes would create more fair, equitable and effective LOCAL funding. They would reduce the amount the legislature must annually transfer all over the state, and allow it to focus more directly on the areas of real need. I think these ideas could drastically change and improve education funding in Mississippi.

Sincerely,

Wayne Lennep

Moss Point, MS 39563

Alderman, Ward-6  
City of Moss Point  
Phone:

